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**Women in educational management in Sarawak : a study of traditional and  
professional challenges.**

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**WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN SARAWAK:  
A STUDY OF TRADITIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL  
CHALLENGES**

**SITI KATIZAH RAZALI**

**A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol  
in partial fulfilment for the degree of Doctor of Education in the Faculty  
of Social Sciences, Graduate School of Education**

**October 1998**

## **ABSTRACT**

This exploratory study examined how women managers in education in Sarawak combine their traditional and professional roles and deal with potential role conflict. The study is set in the context of an increasing number of women managers in education in Sarawak and the issues this raises for their support, if they are to harmonise their roles and advance professionally. The aim of the study is to furnish policy makers at the national and state level with information to formulate a policy document which could be adopted in preparing a strategy for the advancement of women managers, taking into account their dual roles.

Both quantitative and qualitative paradigms are employed to provide depth and breadth. The postal survey questionnaire was sent to all the 109 women in the target population: all women heads and deputies in schools, teacher training colleges and the State Education Department. There was a 91.7% response rate. Additionally, eight women managers were interviewed in-depth, together with seven spouses and three other senior women in education, who are influential nationally. The eight women managers also completed time-log diaries for a week. Respondents in the survey questionnaire included managers who, at one time, had rejected promotion. This enabled the perceptions of those who had experienced difficulties in relation to promotion to be analysed, as well as those who had not. Combining the quantitative and qualitative approaches meant that they complemented, supplemented and illuminated each other.

The study did not aim, initially, to explore the cultural dimension but it emerged during the interviews that their specific cultural origins (Malay, Iban and Chinese) were a significant determinant of the women managers' perceptions of their dual roles. Indigenous culture was not found to be a barrier to advancement but the research has revealed that when studying women in educational management consideration of individual cultural contexts gives additional insights into their perceptions of their two roles. Interviews with the spouses revealed corresponding views to those of their wives pertaining to women's traditional roles; they also saw complementary roles in the partnership. The close support of the extended family is a significant factor in the study. For the women studied, the boundaries between their personal and professional roles were not clear-cut. Work invaded their personal lives and family needs were perceived as paramount when considering promotion. Values relating to caring and nurturing imbued their professional and personal lives. The different cultural and environmental experiences of the women managers contributed to their varied perceptions of role conflict. Many had developed coping strategies which reduced such conflict and supported their successful performance as workers, wives, mothers and daughters.

Impediments to the advancement of women managers are identified and possible courses of future action suggested. Implications for policy makers at the Ministry of Education and State Education Department as well as for future research are highlighted.

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Impediments to the advancement of women managers are identified and possible courses of future action suggested. Implications for policy makers at the Ministry of Education and State Education Department as well as for future research are highlighted.



## **DEDICATION**

to

**MY MOTHER HAJJAH MASTURA BINTI KULA**

and

to the memory of my father

**HAJI RAZALI BIN CHI**

who encouraged me to take up this pursuit.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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May Almighty Allah bless us all.

## **AUTHOR'S DECLARATION**

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree.

The thesis has not been presented to any other University for examination in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Signed .....  .....

Date ..... 17 November 1998 .....

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

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<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>SED</b>	State Education Department
<b>EPRD</b>	Educational Planning and Research Division
<b>NEP</b>	National Education Philosophy
<b>IAB</b>	Institute Aminuddin Baki
<b>TTC</b>	Teachers' Training Colleges
<b>NPW</b>	The National Policy For Women
<b>HoD</b>	Head of Department
<b>DEO</b>	Divisional Education Officer

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

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***Women managers:*** For this study, the scope covers only those women holding promotional posts in Secondary Schools, Teacher Training Colleges and in the State Education Department, all of whom are graduates. It therefore includes all Sector and Sectional Heads and their Deputies, all College and School Heads and Deputy Heads, and all women holding promotional posts in the Department.

***Traditional roles:*** These are the roles expected of women in the society in which they were brought up. The traditional mindset in Sarawak, as in many other societies, has been that girls should stay at home and learn domestic skills to prepare them to be good housewives and mothers. Only 'progressive' parents, who were able to see the importance and value of education for their children, sent both their sons and daughters to school, and these young men and women upon completion of their studies usually joined the civil service. With opportunities for education thrown wide open since the 1970s more girls were receiving education and entering the workforce, both in the public and private sector. Some have emerged as leaders and managers in their organisation, like being Head of Department and Dean in the University, Heads of schools, Sector Heads and Secretary-General in the Ministry of Education. Nonetheless, although the notion of 'a woman's place is in the home' is no longer the norm, she is constantly reminded of her position in the home either as mother, grandmother, sister or daughter or some combination of these roles. In the case of working women, these have to be managed alongside the expectations of them as workers and professionals. The assumption is that women, who juggle careers with motherhood, tend to put the needs of the family before their professional advancement. In such situations, their families come before their careers. The thinking behind the 'traditional role' of women incorporates the influence of culture, religion, background, societal pressures and family. The married woman can have a role as wife and mother, daughter (-in-law), sister and grandparent in her family structure, whereas a single woman will have a role within her family of parents, brothers and sisters and often to the entire extended family.

***Professional roles :*** A Head's duties in the Malaysian Education System are as stipulated in the job specification (see Appendices 1a and 1b). The professional roles of heads entail their whole work function as stipulated in their job specification and also their work-related social functions, such as, attending meetings away from the school on matters like sports, dance and drama competitions, entertaining visitors to the school and district and attending dinners as the Head of a school. A profession is an occupation which performs a crucial social function and involves lengthy training, as well as a considerable degree of skill. Professionals have a body of knowledge which is gained not just through experience but through higher education, and there is a process of socialisation (Hoyle 1980). The professional role that is expected of a Head is extensive and varied. At its heart is the dominant value of the clients' interests, that is, the students. To date, newly appointed Heads in Sarawak do not get lengthy training prior to appointment so their induction to headship is by experiential learning. Some are fortunate to be inducted to the job by being Deputy Heads. Some are appointed because their performance as teachers meet certain criteria.

There is talk of 'back-to-back' appointments for school heads which means that as soon as a vacancy exists, it should be filled immediately. This could only be possible if candidates are

identified at least three months before appointment and given the appropriate training for socialisation into headship. This makes the candidates better prepared to take on the professional role. In the case of Sarawak, identifying candidates for headship in advance will be possible in the very near future, but may not be possible for other posts such as Deputy Heads and Senior Teachers (implemented for Grade A schools for the last four years) because of the sheer number involved. Candidates can be selected from Deputies who are performing well in their schools. This will be a departure from the present system of appointing Heads based on their merits alone, irrespective of their experience of school management.

*New promotional opportunities* : The 'new promotional opportunities' in the State Education service involve new criteria and a system for promotion which has contributed significantly to more women being appointed to management posts in schools within the last three years. Prior to that, promotion in the education sector in Sarawak, had always taken into consideration seniority, length of service, performance as indicated by the Annual Confidential Report of the past three years, race and gender, very often in this order. The introduction of the New Salary Remuneration Scheme (NSRS) for all civil servants in the country in 1992 adopted a performance-pay relationship. Teachers, as civil servants, are likewise given the choice to opt for the scheme or else remain in the Cabinet Committee Report Scheme (CCR). In NSRS, annual salary increases on a matrix scale of diagonal, vertical, horizontal, and static are decided by marks in the Annual Confidential Report. The principal assessor for the Annual Confidential Report is the immediate superior within the school, who may be the Deputy Head I in the case of teachers or the Principal in the case of Deputies. The second assessor is the next person in the hierarchy. Aside from functioning as a determinant for annual salary increases, civil servants' promotional prospects are contingent upon their performance during the previous three years as seen in their marks in the Annual Confidential Report.

This system aims to reward those deserving performers by giving them a one-month or half-month salary bonus apart from their salary increases, and, more importantly, better prospects for promotion. In some respects it assures promotion across gender and race discounting seniority, thus representing a 'new procedure' for upgrading an officer. Promotion based on merit has provided access for women to be in management positions in the State Education service.

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **THE RESEARCH AND THE CONTEXT**

### **Introduction**

This chapter introduces the research project, the rationale for the study and the research questions that guided it. This study addresses the challenges women managers face in combining their traditional and professional roles by examining how they combine career and domestic responsibilities and confront cultural and social barriers to advancement. The chapter is presented in five sections: section 1 gives a brief account of the geographical, cultural, educational and conceptual contexts for the study; section 2 discusses the rationale and the research aims identified; section 3 examines the research questions guiding the study and section 4 highlights the significance of the study. The chapter concludes with an outline of the rest of the chapters in this thesis.

### **1.1 The Context of the Research**

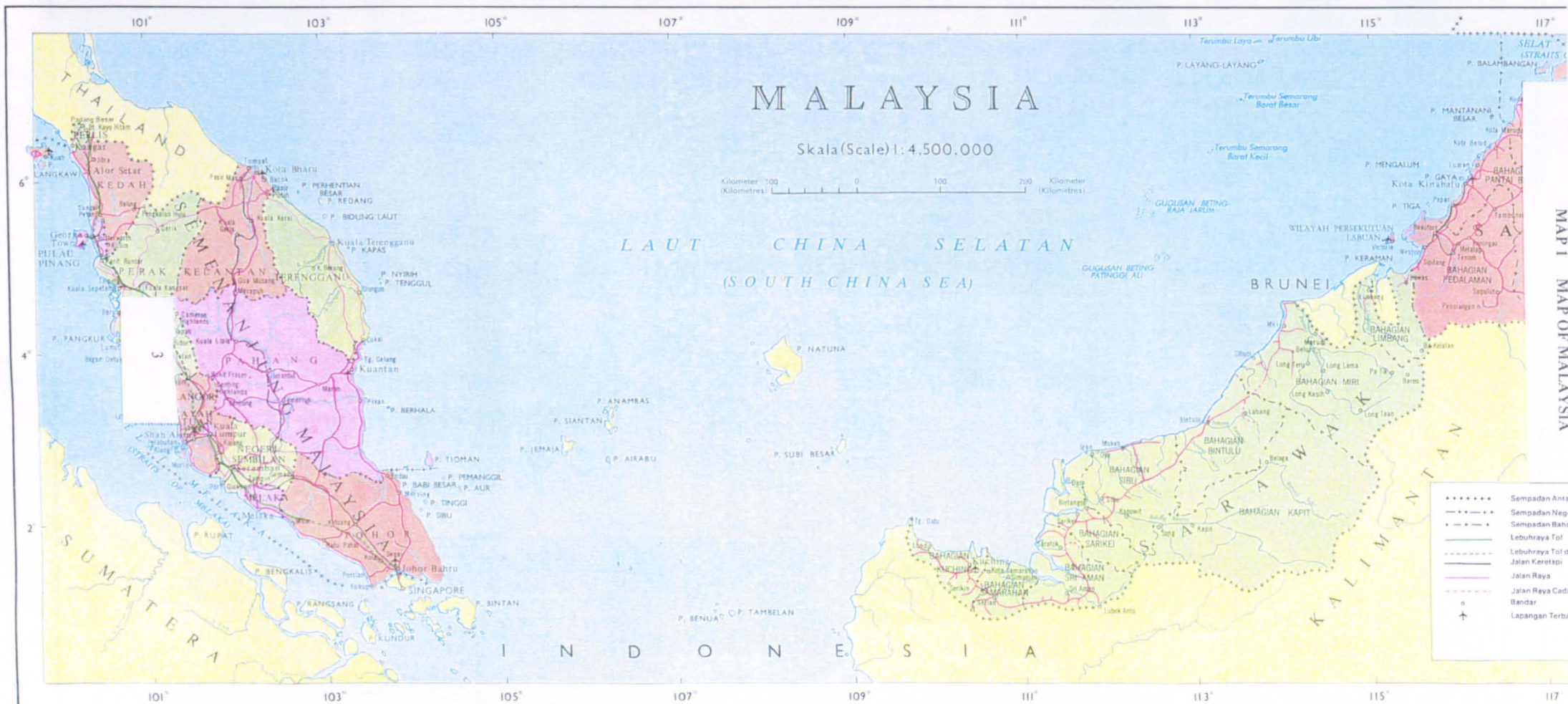
The research takes into account the geographical, cultural and educational context of Malaysia with particular reference to Sarawak. The conceptual context encompasses a broad management perspective reflecting the stance of the researcher.

### ***1.1.1 The Geographical Context***

Malaysia consists of 14 states; 12 are found in the Peninsula and 2 are in the Island of Borneo. Sarawak is situated on the western coast of the island of Borneo and is the focus of this study. It occupies an area of approximately 124,449 sq. km. and is separated geographically from the more developed Peninsula Malaysia by the South China Sea in the west and directly adjoins the State of Sabah to the north-east. Inland the State is bordered by the Kalingang Range which is situated in Kalimantan, Indonesia (Map 1). Sarawak is the largest state in the Federation of Malaysia accounting for about 37.5% of the total area. Topographically, Sarawak may be broadly classified into three principal terrain groups: the alluvial coastal plain, the mountainous interior and the undulating central belt. While the first region is characterised by peat soil, mangrove, nipah and other swamp forests, the mountainous interior is generally over 300 metres above sea level and is thickly covered by primary forest and dissected by extremely swift flowing rivers with numerous rapids. The central undulating belt, the most populated and developed region of the State, extends throughout its length. The belt varies in width from 32 to 160 kilometres and merges with the mountain ranges of the south-eastern fringe of the interior. Sarawak has a total of 55 navigable rivers and streams and despite the rapid road-building and numerous timber tracks in recent years, these rivers are still Sarawak's natural highways. Riverine transport continues to be the major mode of transportation for both economic and social activities linking the largely underdeveloped rural areas with the towns. Another mode of transportation is by domestic flights between the major towns as well as with the rural areas but, especially in the remote interior, these are often constrained by visibility problems. Hence transportation and accessibility, especially in the rural areas, rely to a large extent on the condition and the navigability of the rivers although many coastal roads, development roads, feeder and rural roads now link the villages to the smaller towns.

Sarawak is divided into 9 administrative divisions: Kuching, Sri Aman, Sibuan, Miri, Limbang, Sarikei, Kapit, Bintulu and Samarahan Divisions (Map 2). The administrative divisions are experiencing different rates of development because of historical and

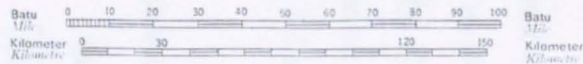






# MALAYSIA (SARAWAK)

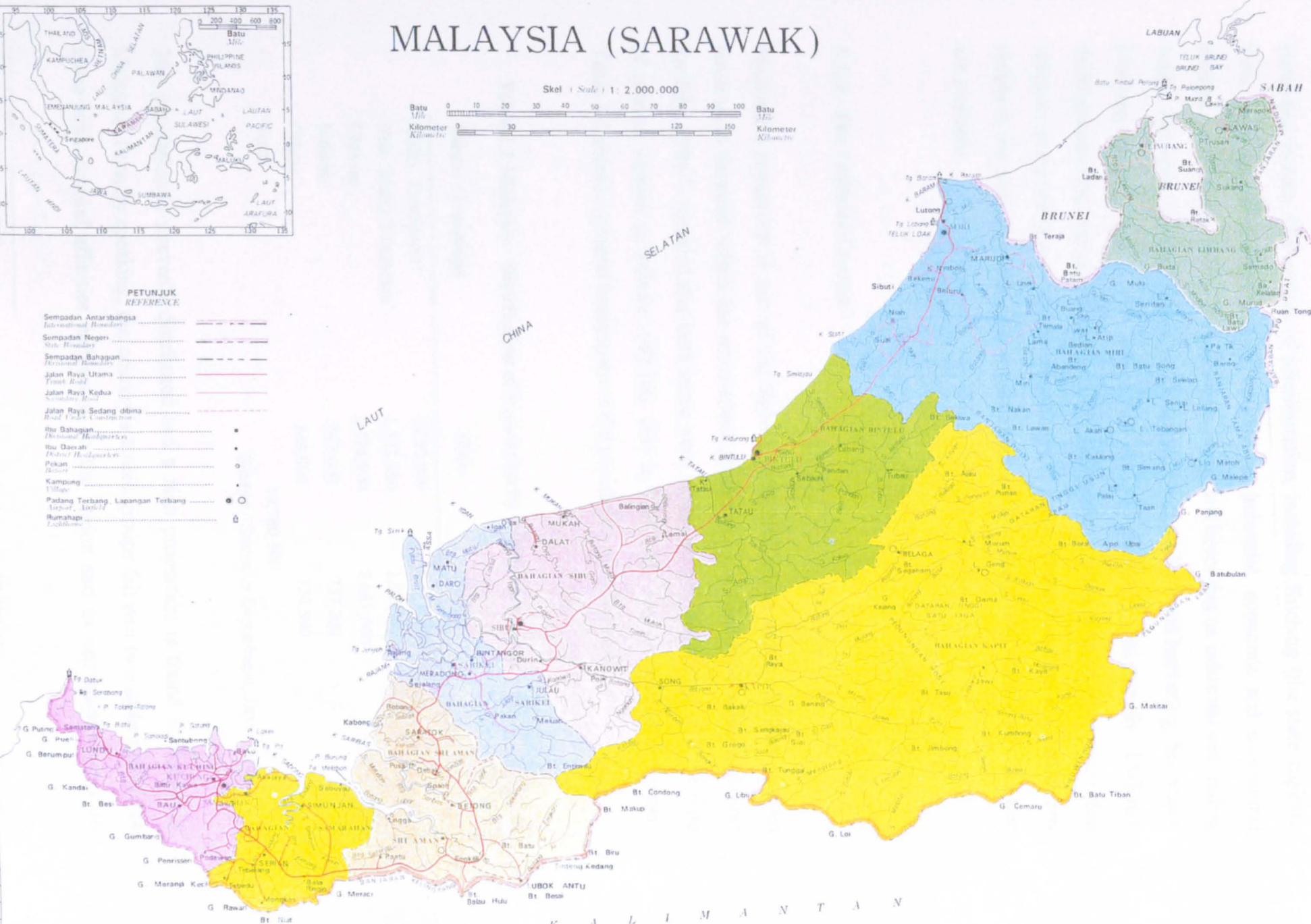
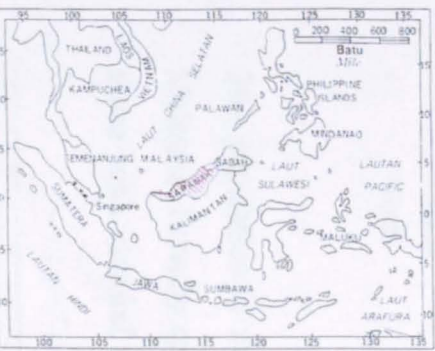
Skala (Scale) 1 : 2,000,000



## PETUNJUK REFERENCE

- Sempadan Antarabangsa  
*International Boundary* .....
- Sempadan Negeri  
*State Boundary* .....
- Sempadan Bahagian  
*Divisional Boundary* .....
- Jalan Raya Utama  
*Main Road* .....
- Jalan Raya Kedua  
*Secondary Road* .....
- Jalan Raya Sedang dibina  
*Road Under Construction* .....
- Rai Bahagian  
*Divisional Headquarters* .....
- Rai Daerah  
*District Headquarters* .....
- Pekan  
*Recort* .....
- Kampung  
*Village* .....
- Padang Terbang, Lapangan Terbang  
*Airport, Airstad* .....
- Rumahapi  
*Lighthouse* .....

CHINA  
SELATAN  
LAUT



MAP 2 MAP OF SARAWAK

economic factors. The centres of administration, including Kuching (the state capital), Sibü and Miri, have developed into significant industrial, economic and educational centres. Bintulu is exploiting its natural resources and becoming an industrial and trading centre. However, those divisions which depend on agriculture and lumbering, Sri Aman, Limbang, Kapit, Sarikei and Samarahan are not developing as rapidly. Different development rates can also be seen within each administrative division where the urban areas are progressing more quickly than the rural areas. These inequities are also clearly visible in the kind of educational opportunities and the social and welfare services that are available.

### 1.1.2 The Cultural Context

Malaysia's population is one of the highest variegated ethnic mixes, and this is even more so in Sarawak which has more ethnic groupings. The Monthly Statistical Report for July, 1996 <sup>1</sup> revealed that both sexes were almost equally distributed with the ratio of men to women as follows: 102:100, that is, 9,973,400 men to 9,807,100 women. Table 1.1 shows a general breakdown of the population of Malaysia by sex.

**Table 1.1 Malaysia: Distribution of Population by Ethnic Groupings**

Ethnic Groupings	Male	Female
Malay 'Bumiputra'	5,020,900	4,991,200
Non-'Malay Bumiputra'	1,122,200	1,082,600
Chinese	2,722,900	2,651,000
Indians	763,600	757,500
Others	343,800	324,800
Total	19,780,500	

*Source : Statistics Department, June, 1995*

The population is unevenly distributed and a high proportion is found in Peninsular Malaysia. Broadly speaking, the country's ethnic groups fall into two main categories: those with cultural affinities indigenous to the region and to one another who are

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Department, June 1996 - Total population of Malaysia is 19,780,500

classified as 'Bumiputra'; and those whose cultural affinities lie outside, who are classified as 'non-Bumiputra'. The 'Bumiputra' groups are highly differentiated and can be divided into three broad categories; the aborigines ('orang asli'), the Malays, and the non-Malay Bumiputra categories or Malay-related groups which consist of the Iban, Bidayuh, Melanau, Kenyah, Kayan, Bisayah, Kadazan, Bajau, Murut, Kelabit, Lun Bawang and Penan. On the other hand, the non-'Bumiputra' groups consist mainly of Chinese and Indians with much smaller communities of Pakistanis, Arabs, Sinhalese and Eurasians (Zulmahari, 1997: 17-18).

The non-'Bumiputra' Malays are mainly found in the two Borneon States of Sabah and Sarawak. In Sarawak they are referred to collectively as 'Dayaks'. Sarawak has a population of about 1.8 million which is unevenly distributed throughout the State. Table 1.2 shows the breakdown of the population.

**Table 1.2 Sarawak: Distribution of Population by Ethnicity**

<b>Ethnic Groupings</b>	<b>Population</b>
Iban	490,000
Malay	350,000
Bidayuh	140,000
Melanau	96,000
Kenyah	16,068
Kayan	15,020
Lun Bawang	12,010
Penan	10,000
Kelabit	7,303
Bisaya	5,149
Chinese	480,000
Indian and Indonesian	18,700

*(Source: Malaysian Information Services Department, 1993)*

The Malays are mostly found in the coastal areas of Kuching, Samarahan and Sri Aman Divisions and the Melanaus in the coastal plains in the Sibü, Sarikei and Bintulu Divisions. The Ibans are scattered within the midland and mountainous interior regions, mostly in the Sri Aman, Sibü, Miri and Kapit Divisions while the Bidayuh are concentrated in the rural areas of the Kuching Division. The Melanaus are to be found along the coast, particularly between Mukah and Dalat and are particularly associated

with sago-planting. The Kedayans and Bisayas are also coastal dwellers and farmers. The Kayans, Kenyahs, Lun Bawang and Kelabits live in the interior as shifting cultivators, hunters and collectors of jungle produce. The Chinese are mainly found in the major business and administrative centres throughout the State. Within each different ethnic group are different cultural and traditional practices, but they also share certain basic similarities, such as a preference for living in communal dwellings, known as longhouses, among the non-Malay 'Bumiputras'.

Another feature of the cultural context is the extended family which exists throughout Malaysia and is particularly prominent in Sarawak. This State is still an agrarian society but women have an important role in managing resources and decisions. Men do the physically demanding work on the farms but the decisions relating to what types of paddy to plant, how much paddy to dry or how much to sell are made by women. It is still a common phenomenon to find three generations - grandparents, parents and grandchildren, living in the same house which means that grandparents are around to care for the grandchildren. However, Malaysia today is undergoing tremendous socio-economic changes and this has had an effect on the role and status of women in the country. Owing to their involvement in the public sphere, women not only have roles as mothers and wives, but also as professionals in their respective fields. As a result of this, working women find it difficult to meet the demands and expectations of their given roles. The presence of women in the workforce has almost doubled over the last thirty years; their participation in the labour force increased from 35% in 1970 to 47% in 1990 (Husna, 1997). The factors responsible for this increase are the rapid expansion of educational facilities for women which have improved and broadened their skills, and this has led to a change in their attitudes towards paid employment. It has also encouraged their movement from a rural-based to an urban-based work environment (Nagaraj, 1995). The problems faced by working mothers are related to childcare and their children's development. The problems are made more acute by the erosion of the extended family and difficulties experienced in getting house help and quality child-minders. For example, a study in Malaysia in 1990 found that of the 2,725 families studied, 57.9% are nuclear families (Beritanita, 1992), thereby indicating that more couples are having to cope on their own without the support of the extended family.

### ***1.1.3 The Educational Context***

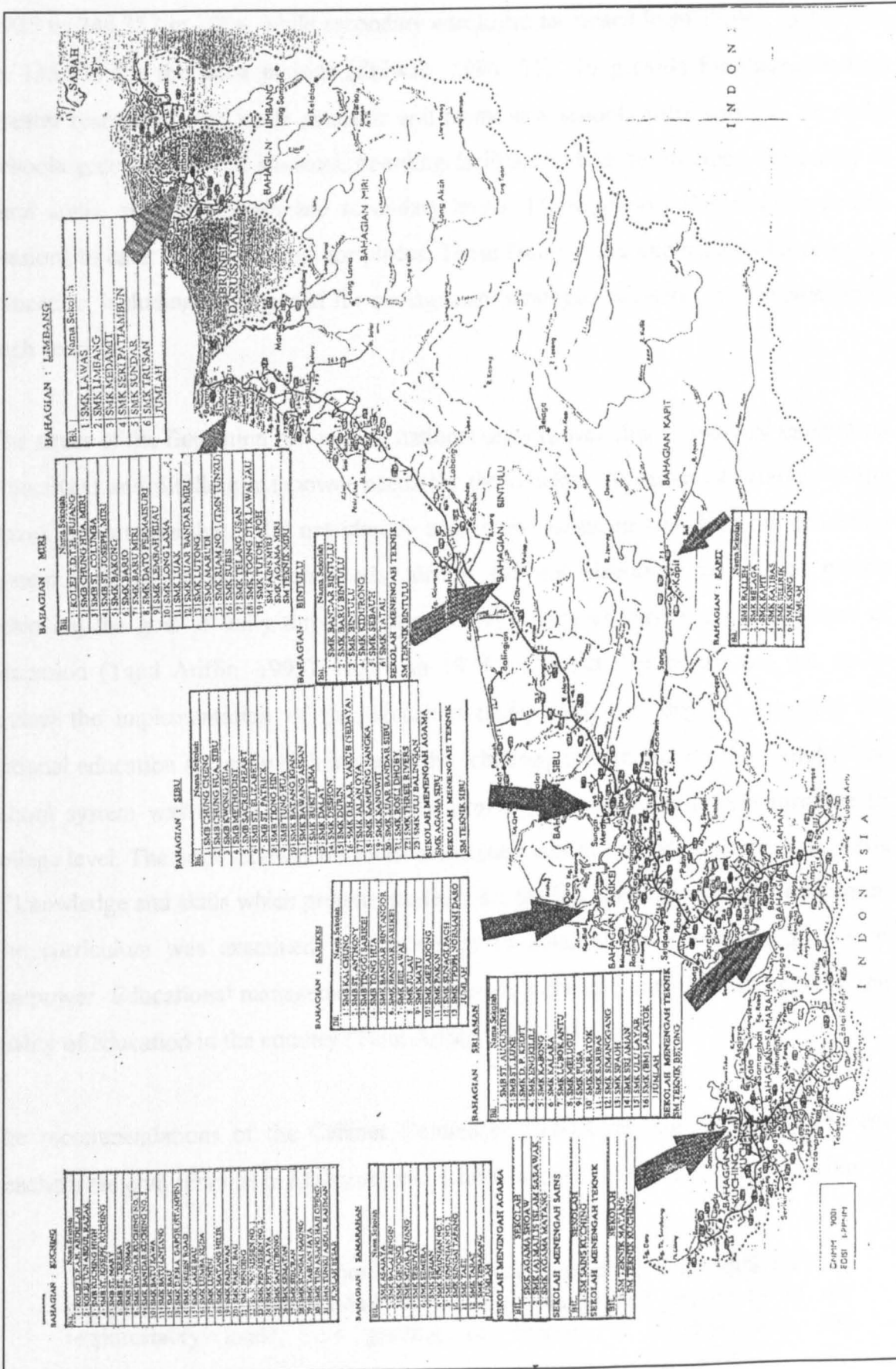
Malaysia, as in many other developing nations of the world, has adopted a unitary system of education aimed at social and political integration. The Malaysian education system is a public service and administration of education is centralised at the Federal level where major national policies and objectives of education are formulated. The centralised and bureaucratic system ensures power and control is held at the Ministry of Education (MOE) and delegated to the State Education Department (SED). Its administrative structure is organised at four hierarchical levels, namely: national, state, division/district/resident and school (EPRD, 1994). At State level, the SED is directly responsible to the MOE for the implementation of national education policies and the management of all schools and other educational administrative institutions in the State. In Sarawak the Education Department operates on a four-tier hierarchical model comprising: (a) the State Education Office; (b) the Divisional Education Offices in each of the seven administrative centres in Kuching, Sri Aman, Sibü, Miri, Limbang, Sarikei and Kapit; (c) the District Education Offices based in the 19 administrative centres; and (d) the schools (154 secondary and 1252 primary). Map 3 shows the distribution of secondary schools (the focus of the research) in Sarawak.

Historically, the foundation of the National Education Policy, as enacted in the 1961 Education Act, was based on the Razak Report of 1956 and the Rahman Talib Report of 1960. However, the rapid moves towards integrating the system of education in Sabah and Sarawak with that of Peninsular Malaysia began to take shape only when the two states joined Malaysia on 16 September, 1963. Full integration with the national education system took place when the Education Act of 1961 was extended to these two states in January 1976. Included in the recommendations of the Rahman Talib Review Committee, which were incorporated in the 1961 Education Act, were:

1. Universal free primary education;
2. Automatic promotion up to Form 3 (EPRD, 1985).



### MAP 3 SARAWAK: DISTRIBUTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS



Since 1992, more than 90% of students have completed eleven years of schooling which means that there has been a large increase in the enrolment of students at primary and secondary level. In Sarawak primary enrolment rose from 117,962 in 1965 to 216,917 in 1985 to 244,352 in 1994, while secondary enrolment increased from 12,941 to 111,206 to 135,973 for the same periods (Zulwali, 1996: 55). To provide for these numbers greater resources were made available and many new schools were opened. To make schools accessible for all students, boarding facilities had to be provided, especially in rural areas, at both primary and secondary levels. Many schools also operate double sessions to cater for the demand for places. These factors have implications for resource allocation, including staffing, and for management strategies in relation to the running of such schools.

The stress of the Education Act was on national unity (promoting its national integration objectives) and fulfilling manpower needs for the country. A weakness detected in the Razak Report was that it did not identify accurately the extent to which the education system fulfilled the manpower needs; also it did not elaborate on how to ensure achieving the goal of unity through education in a national curriculum and system of education (Tajul Ariffin, 1993). Hence in 1974 a Cabinet Committee was set up to review the implementation of the education policy with the aim of examining the national education system which included the schooling system and the curriculum. The school system was viewed from all levels, primary, secondary and sixth form up to college level. The emphasis was on social orientation and on education forming the basis of knowledge and skills which prepare students for the job market and higher education. The curriculum was examined with reference to national unity and the quality of manpower. Educational management and resources were also examined to improve the quality of education in the country (Tajul Ariffin, 1993: 31).

The recommendations of the Cabinet Committee Report relating to serving officers (teachers are civil servants in Malaysia) and school management include the following:

1. In the context of school management becoming more difficult and complex, it is recommended that schools be graded according to the responsibility load. This grading of schools is in line with the



recommendation of the Aziz Salary Commission and should be carried out from time to time when the need arises.

2. To safeguard the standard of management at the school level, it is recommended that headmasters be given training courses, headmasters should be exposed to new development in education to enable them to provide effective professional leadership.

3. In view of the rapid educational development in this country and the necessity to train professional officers and other personnel in the Ministry of Education for better quality work and output, it is opportune that a National Educational Staff Training Institute be established.

*(Report of the Cabinet Committee, 1985: 161-163)*

Following these recommendations, adjustments have been made. The exercise on upgrading of schools, both primary and secondary, has been carried out with criteria provided by the MOE. Formerly the grading of schools to Grade A, B, C or D was based primarily on enrolment, but now considerations include size of school and location, as well as a boarding factor, and schools are graded only as Grade A or B. Hence many schools in Sarawak, including those with very small enrolments in the rural areas have been upgraded to A schools. This means more promotional opportunities as Grade A schools are entitled to three senior assistants (one each for administration, students' affairs, and an afternoon supervisor if they run afternoon sessions) plus heads of departments in languages, social sciences, mathematics and science, vocational subjects and technology. The Ministry of Education Staff Training Institute (MESTI), renamed the National Institute of Educational Management, later renamed Institute Aminuddin Baki (IAB), was established in 1979. Courses on management and new developments in education are conducted for serving heads from time to time by IAB or the SED.

Following the Cabinet Committee Report, the National Education Philosophy (NEP) was formulated in 1988, serving as the guiding principle in all matters pertaining to education planning and implementation in order to ensure a quality education management and delivery system in the country. The National Education Philosophy states that:

“Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce

individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving a high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and the betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large”.

#### ***1.1.4 The Context from a Broad Management Perspective***

In so far as this research is conducted by a woman researcher and is about women, then it might be seen as falling within a feminist tradition. Also, in common with feminist studies, it recognises the special relationship between the researcher and the researched since both are women and both work within the same field. For many, feminist research is equated with qualitative research and is seen as anti-pathetic to quantitative. Therefore it is linked with the rejection of the positive paradigm associated with a masculine approach. But, as Maynard and Purvis (1994) recognise, it is possible within feminist research to use quantitative as well as qualitative research. Maynard and Purvis (1994) quoting Marshall, Skeggs and Glucksmann whose works are multi-sourced, disclosed the use of a range of methods to maximise inputs to the research (p.4). Although resembling feminist research in the ways described above, this study encompasses a broad management perspective, rather than adopting a specific one. Coming from a Malaysian context, the study is informed by an understanding of women's and men's roles in society which does not necessarily equate with Western feminist beliefs about the need for women's emancipation. It is mainly concerned with understanding how women carry out their professional duties and reconciled these with the demands made on them from the home. The approach, employing both qualitative and quantitative paradigms too, is not 'orthodox' feminist. Thus the aims, methodology and presentation are a departure from feminist tradition, thereby reflecting the non-feminist stance of the researcher.

## 1.2 Rationale of the study

In Sarawak, in the early 1970's a woman in the Government's employ would have to resign the day she married, and could be reinstated in the service the following day. The situation was such that, in the words of one woman so affected, 'in a way it was an offence for women to get married', as inevitably they would lose their seniority in the service, which further meant very little opportunity for women to assume senior positions. Traditional sex role stereotyping meant that women were expected to be housewives before any career considerations. The commonly held view was that women were suited to managing households while the management of work organizations was the domain of their male counterparts.

In Sarawak, as in the rest of Malaysia, teachers are civil servants and their employment is governed by the regulations of the General Order. In the 1970's there were too few women teachers, let alone women managers to voice objections to discrimination in employment. Increasing numbers of women employees, and the abolition of the requirement that married women resign, has led to women gaining a voice. It has become noticeable in the last five years that women have begun to make inroads into the male domain of school management, both as senior managers and middle line managers. This can be seen in a recent promotion exercise to Super Scale DG2 from Time Scale DG3 (graduate scale): of the forty promoted, eleven were women. For the middle line managers, any teachers who have the necessary qualifications (which include being confirmed in service, having served for at least five years, having a good report and the right subject) can be appointed as Heads of Departments in Grade A schools. Recently more women have been appointed to such positions. It can generally be assumed that with more women entering the teaching profession compared to the number of male applicants, there will be a continuing upward trend for women to occupy these positions. The door has just begun to open for them and there is no reason for this to be discontinued. The questions to be asked include: Is the main contributing factor to these developments a change in attitude by the Department towards women managers as a whole, or can it be a change in the outlook of women themselves that has brought about this shift? Has the Department's policy of 'new promotional opportunity' contributed to

the increase in the number of women managers? Women's aspirations in the State appear to have changed and now there are greater numbers of women expressing interest in advancement, as demonstrated in the recent promotion exercise. Women are less inclined to reject promotion even where the post is in less attractive places such as the rural areas and periphery. However, some of the women who have opted to take up the challenge as educational managers are confronted by a number of dilemmas when trying to perform their professional roles. This is because the cultural and social expectations of the roles of women are deeply ingrained and differently perceived by those who seek advancement. Seemingly, they encounter many challenges for which they were not prepared. The scope of this study covers only graduate women managers holding promotional posts in secondary schools, teacher training colleges (TTC) and in the SED as the officers holding these posts can be transferred from one to the other. This is not the case with higher institutions such as university and technical colleges. Heads and teachers of primary schools are non-graduates and are therefore not included in the study; a research on primary women heads need to be taken to examine the challenges they face in their dual roles.

Many who aspire to be managers have rejected promotion when it has been offered. This was demonstrated recently when six women and four men, out of a total of twenty-five, rejected promotion from Time Scale (DG3) to Super Scale (DG2). Unearthing the reasons for this phenomenon would be of value since it is in the interests of the State to have the best available human resources to set the course for its future generations. Those who decline placement in senior positions may be suitable candidates with the necessary qualities but extenuating circumstances might have contributed to their decisions to remain where they are instead of moving forward.

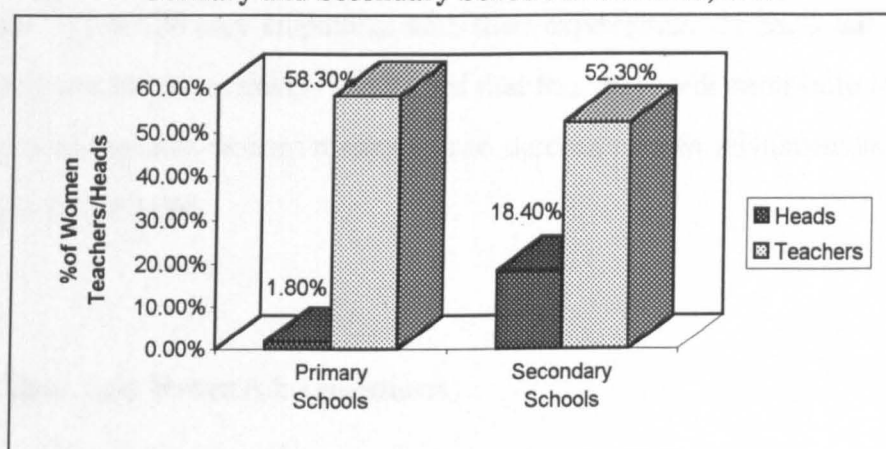
Statistics show that, in common with most countries, there is a very high percentage of women in the teaching profession.

**Table 1.3 Proportion of Female Teachers and Heads to Total Number of Teachers and Heads in Primary and Secondary Schools in Sarawak, 1996**

	Total	No. of Women Teachers/Heads	Percentage
Primary School teachers	14,842	8647	58.3
Primary school heads	1252	22	1.8
Secondary school teachers	8074	4228	52.3
Secondary school heads	147	27	18.4

The primary school teachers in Sarawak are college trained teachers and are non-university graduates. In secondary schools, the teachers in upper secondary schools are mostly graduates but largely non-graduates in junior secondary. From Table 1.3, although there are slightly more women than men in both the primary and secondary sectors, this is not represented in terms of headship. Chart.1.1 illustrates the representation of female heads to female teachers in primary and secondary schools in Sarawak.

**Chart 1.1 Proportion of Female Headteachers to Female Teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools in Sarawak, 1996**



This disparity is very significant in Primary schools, since, even in the urban areas where there are more female teachers, there are only 11 women heads in the 98 urban primary schools. Even the recent promotion exercise for non-graduate teachers did nothing to redress this disparity. The picture is slightly better in secondary schools. Small though the percentage may seem, there is a marked improvement compared to five years ago when there were at most eight women heads at the Annual Secondary School Principals' Conference. The numbers of women in the teaching profession, both as teachers and

managers in Sarawak are therefore shown to be increasing. The focus of this study is on management in secondary schools and teacher training colleges involving graduates in promotional posts as deputy Heads and Heads in schools and Heads of Departments and Principals of TTC. Also included in the study are eleven women graduate officers holding promotional posts in the State Education Office.

No study on women in educational management has so far been done in Sarawak but the researcher has first hand experience of being appointed to a secondary school as its first woman head. This experience, and an interest in the advancement of women, has generated the area of study. It is felt that women educational managers in the State are not free from problems when trying to combine traditional and professional roles. Thus, the reasons for selecting this subject are both personal and professional. It is hoped that by studying the challenges faced by women educational managers, the researcher can better understand their roles, status, positions, perceptions, perspectives and aspirations. Viewing perspectives from other women managers will also allow the researcher to reflect on her own experience, but she aims to be objective when interpreting their accounts. While she may empathize with their experiences she must adhere to a format which ensures her impartiality. It is hoped that this study will contribute to the formation of a basis from which women managers can succeed in their advancement as educational managers in the State.

### **1.3 Aims and Research Questions**

The overall aim of this research is to study the personal and professional challenges facing women educational managers in Sarawak, especially in the light of an increasing number of women being promoted and seeking promotion as managers in schools.

The main aims of the study are as follows:

1. To investigate the women managers' perceptions of their traditional and professional roles;

2. To describe and analyse the various personal and professional challenges that women managers have to face when in employment;
3. To identify strategies for supporting women in their educational management roles.

On the basis of the main aims of the study, the questions which the study addresses are as follows:

1. How do women managers perceive their traditional roles?
2. How do women managers perceive their professional roles?
3. Is there a relationship between age and work experience of women managers and their perceptions of traditional roles?
4. Is there a relationship between age and work experience of women managers and their perceptions of their professional roles?
5. What are the reasons for women managers accepting or rejecting promotion?
6. How do women managers anticipate combining their traditional and professional roles?
7. What differences are there in the perceptions of traditional and professional roles between women from the rural and women from the urban areas?
8. What challenges do women managers face in their traditional roles?
9. What challenges do women managers face in their professional roles?
10. What are the differences between the challenges faced by those in the urban and the rural areas?
11. How do the women managers combine their traditional and professional roles?
12. What kinds of support are given by the families of women managers in their traditional functions?
13. What kinds of support do women managers feel they need from members of their families?

14. How does the organization women managers are in provide support for their professional roles?
15. What kinds of support could have been given by the women managers' organizations to prepare them for their roles in educational management?
16. What other kinds of support do women managers need from their organizations to enhance their professional roles?

#### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

In the researcher's view the findings of the study could be of value to those who are either directly or indirectly concerned with the welfare of women educational managers in the State. They may:

1. Add to knowledge and understanding of women in educational management by showing what the phenomenon looks like in Malaysia and the way it is affected by different cultures.
2. Assist existing women managers to reduce tensions when combining their traditional and professional roles by suggesting coping strategies should they face any conflict;
3. Support aspiring women managers, who are still hesitant to assume managerial roles, in overcoming their fear of facing role conflict;
4. Encourage women teachers who have not aspired to go further in their career paths to be motivated to do so;
5. Assist education officers in the Academic and Service Sectors in planning and implementing training programmes and courses on management for educational managers and potential educational managers;
6. Provide guidelines for education officers in the Service Sector when implementing the posting of women managers to make the best possible use of available human resources.



It is also felt that the findings of the study could be informative to policy makers who are concerned with the quality of services which are provided to students through quality leadership exemplified in schools, TTCs and the SED. It could do this by providing the framework for the placement and choice of candidates for various posts. The need for establishing a fully caring society, is identified as the Seventh Central Strategic Challenge of Vision 2020, which states:

“By the year 2020, Malaysia is to be a united nation, with a confident Malaysian Society, infused by strong moral and ethical values, living in a society that is democratic, liberal and tolerant, caring, economically just and equitable, progressive and prosperous, and in full possession of an economy that is competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient”.

While not setting aside the need for providing quality education for the students, creating a caring society is one of the areas of concern in the Vision of the National Education Philosophy. The Seventh Challenge reads:

“The challenge of establishing a fully caring society and a caring culture, a social system in which society will come before self, in which the welfare of the people will revolve not around the state or the individual but around a strong resilient family system”.

The researcher also hopes that this study will generate further research in similar areas of concern in the State and in other States in Malaysia.

The purpose of this research is to examine the current situation in Sarawak in relation to the position of women managers in education so that the researcher can contribute to the formulation of a policy document by the SED. This document which is for Short to Medium Term Plans would aim to propose measures which prepare women managers for their new responsibilities, while ensuring that the best people are selected for advancement. It would also address the issues which, as research shows, result from the conflicts emanating from the duality of roles; roles which women managers must try to combine. The results of the research are intended to benefit policy makers and participants who may be encouraged to contribute if they know that the findings which relate to their situation will be made available to them. It is anticipated that the research findings will identify recommendations which can be made to women seeking promotion relating to how the professional and traditional roles of women managers can be

harmonized, and what provision needs to be made for the better preparation of women managers for educational managerial roles.

## **1.5 Organisation of the Thesis**

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter 1 has focused on the geographical, cultural, educational and conceptual contexts of the study. The need for the study, research questions and specific aims have also been discussed. The next chapter will review related literature from Malaysia and South-east Asia as well as Western literature. The first part focuses on culture - both Malaysian and South-east Asian, and how it affects perceptions of the traditional and professional roles of women in these societies. The chapter examines the advancement of women by reviewing literature on women in management and women in educational management in Malaysia as well as the U.K and U.S. It also outlines the conceptual framework of the study. Chapter 3 discusses the methodology and in particular the methodological rationale, research instruments, respondents of the study, data collection procedures and their limitations and methods of data analysis. Research findings and analysis of perceptions of traditional and professional roles of women managers in education in Sarawak are examined in Chapter 4. In Chapter 5, the main findings of the study and their implications will be highlighted. It then makes recommendations, in general, for the policy makers and for future related research.

## **Summary**

An analysis of the perceptions of women managers of their professional and traditional roles and the challenges they experience in education in Sarawak may provide a greater insight and understanding of how these women combine their roles. Many, often with difficulty, have succeeded in their dual roles. Others have yet to find the balance. It is hoped that the findings will furnish policy makers with sufficient information to formulate a policy document that can define steps to be taken by the Sarawak State

Education Department to prepare women managers for promotion with the intention of having the best people to do the job. The short to medium term Plan aims to address the conflicts between the professional and traditional roles of women managers in education in Sarawak.

It is anticipated that the research will provide some important findings that will help shape future training programmes, and, at the same time, lend direction to the establishment of other relevant and related professional support services as a means of improving educational management and educational standards in the State.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **BILATERALISM AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE**

#### **Introduction**

A study of women in educational management in Sarawak would be incomplete without taking into account the ethnic and cultural diversity of the population. Before looking at the international literature on women in educational management in Malaysia, it is appropriate to describe the framework within which women in educational management operate in the country. However, access to the Malaysian literature was not possible until the researcher returned to Malaysia and after the questionnaire had been constructed. It was only after reading the Malaysian literature and noting its emphasis on ethnic and cultural diversity that the importance of these factors became apparent. This was confirmed in the interviews when it was possible to follow up the ethnic and cultural factors which contribute to the women managers' perceptions of traditional roles of women in society. Therefore this chapter includes a detailed discussion of ethnic and cultural factors, which as the conclusion presented in chapter 5 shows, deserve further research.

Understanding the different cultures of the various ethnic groups provides insights into the differences and similarities in traditional and cultural values, practices and norms pertaining to the role and status of women of all the different ethnic groups involved in the study. This minimises the danger of drawing generalisations from one group and

applying them to others in the same category, in this case, women educational managers. However, literature on the various ethnic groups is limited. Only the three major ethnic groups in Sarawak, the Malays, Ibans and Chinese are examined since several studies have been carried out on women in these groups.

It is worth noting that most of the studies on the cultures quoted were carried out in the 1970's and 1980's because this was the period when there was general interest in the study of the various cultures by both local and foreign researchers. Culture is under attack from outside influences and there is a growing awareness, amongst the ethnic groups in Sarawak that the preservation of culture is important. The Sarawak State Government has promoted seminars and conferences on the theme of culture. It has funded research on culture within the Council for Customary Laws (Majlis Adat Istiadat) to generate further interest and to help ethnic groups to understand their own culture. However, discussions with Council members and researchers reveal that there has not been much work done relating to the role and status of women in the various groups. This explains the lack of more recent material on the subject of this study, women in educational management in Sarawak and the conflicts they experience arising out of their traditional and professional roles. Exploring the various cultures is crucial for the context-specific account which this researcher intends to produce, as she has observed that there are significant differences between various groups.

The literature review focuses on women in educational management, particularly at the school level, the role of culture and conflicts between the professional and traditional roles of women. Literature from Malaysia and South-east Asia is reviewed to explain the position and status of women in the region and to identify those cultural influences which have a bearing on women in management roles in Sarawak. In particular, the South-east Asian perspective on 'feminism' or the concept of bilateralism is examined and consideration is given to the influence of customary laws and protocol (adat)<sup>1</sup>. Western literature, mainly from the U.S. and U.K., relating to women in educational management is critically reviewed for its relevance to the Malaysian situation in order to

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<sup>1</sup> 'adat' is a Malaysian and Indonesian term which represents indigenous values, ideals and sentiments. In Malaysian society the term is used by other ethnic groups in the region who uphold similar values.

address gaps not filled due to the dearth of literature in Malaysia on the subject. The advancement and development of women in educational management in Malaysia is discussed with particular reference to Sarawak.

## **2.1 Gender and Bilaterality in South-east Asia - The Alternative Paradigm**

This section addresses bilateralism in South-east Asia, the indigenous discourse or alternative paradigm to feminism as identified by researchers in the region. In the researcher's own cultural setting, this issue would not constitute an important part of the discussion on women in educational management, but, since the research reported in this dissertation has been framed as part of an educational programme in the Western environment, it needs to be addressed to explain the approach used in the study.

South-east Asia is an area that defies generalisations and calls for historical and cultural specificity, particularly in questions related to gender and development.... It has been characterised as an area of complementarity of male and female roles.

(Penny Van Esterik, 1995:248)

Van Esterick's quote extracted from "Rewriting Gender and Development Anthropology in South-east Asia" reflects the thinking of Southeast Asianists as well as other anthropologists who have done research in the region. One such writer and researcher in the South-east Asian context is Karim (1992, 1995) whose in-depth research into the subject of women and culture is based on her anthropological background. Her field of study which often involves immersion into the particular group(s) of people being studied (for example, living amongst them, adopting their way of life) plus her own similar background to the culture of the people she studied, lent weight to her findings about women and culture from an indigenous discourse. Karim's writing of 1995 which specifically addressed the issue of gender and bilaterality was drawn from works compiled out of the result of a Workshop on 'Research Methodologies, Theoretical Perspectives and Directions for Policy in Gender Studies in

South-east Asia'<sup>1</sup> . It serves as the main source of literature from Malaysia on this subject. The writers<sup>2</sup> who contributed to the volume (arising from the Workshop) attempted to show that Western Feminist Theory is not applicable in South-east Asia and recognised the greater influence of religion within the region. They acknowledged gender differentiation in South-east Asian society and the power held by men which is reflected in their public and political roles. The writers showed that women's power derives from folk traditions but is none the less real. They argued that the Western hierarchical model is shown to be inappropriate in relation to the distribution of power which overlaps between each gender and their complementary roles. Bilateralism is a more appropriate term for the South-east Asian context.

Karim (1995) defined bilateralism as 'the composite meanings of ideas of complementarity unaccompanied by statements of differential value, and the egocentricity of behaviour allowing status differences to be reduced within and without local groupings'(p.37). Bilaterality is used when attempting to explain the relationships which exist within groups in a society where power is not associated with clearly defined hierarchies but rests with groups or individuals who have complementary roles. From her perspective, bilateralism as a critique of kinship theory in anthropology and Western Feminist Theory in the social sciences, provides a useful theoretical perspective for understanding gender and other forms of communal relations in South-east Asia outside the framework of a western political discourse. This suggests bilaterality as an emic (insider) statement of social value, of how formal relationships are popularised and come to convey meanings on the interpersonal, familial or communal level which may be contradictory to public statements of these relationships. From this perspective, in bilateralism natural differences are recognised and cultivated and there is no place for universalism proposed by Western feminists (Karim, 1995: 37-45). Universalism generalises across culture whereby findings from one group are used to explain other

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<sup>1</sup> The Workshop was organised by the Universiti Sains Malaysia-based KANITA (Women in Development) project and UNESCO. Participants included those from the region as well as from outside who have done research on the issues of women in South-east Asia. Karim convened this workshop and edited the papers from the Workshop in the volume 'Male and Female in Developing South-east Asia.

<sup>2</sup> Firth, R., Karim, W.J., Klein-Hutheising, O., Nagata, J., Hobart, M., Ngaosyvathn, M., O'Harrow, S., Hughes-Freeland, F., Illo, J., Ingrid R. and Penny Van Esterick,

groups, whereas in many instances it is culture-specific. She concluded that South-east Asia provides a field area for the application of bilateralism as a conceptual model of Social Organisation. In Island South-east Asia in particular, and in parts of mainland South-east Asia, bilateralism is the operational principle of activating relationships of kinship, gender and class, where complementarity of roles and status is not clearly associated with formal hierarchical distinctions of power or authority (p.60). Rather distinctions are seen more in terms of eldership and seniority with respect accorded to those more senior in age and position. There seems to be an element of respectful co-existence between the sexes hence avoidance of rivalry.

An important feature of South-east Asian bilateralism is the status of women vis-a-vis men as evidenced from studies such as McKinley (1983 cited by Karim, 1995) who argued for the importance of siblingship, which reduces sexual differences among those of the same generation and instead highlights seniority and eldership (p.39). She also cited Winzeler (1974, 1976) who described gender relations in South-east Asia as complementary but non-hierarchical (p.39). There is no clear demarcation in the social order between the sexes but instead one group is seen to be supporting the other. Such a social network suggests the diffusion of status concepts relating to gender. This is an issue which the researcher has set out to address in this study; that the growing number of women in managerial positions in education in Sarawak and their experiences as women educational managers may be a reflection of the social order of the society and its groupings.

Van Esterik (1995) indicates that the high status of women in South-east Asian society is due to their contribution to agriculture, inheritance rights and control over finances (p.249). Papnek and Schwede (1988 cited in Karim, 1995) make the point that it is this control over finances which enables women to develop their entrepreneurial skills (p.28). Errington's (1989 cited in Karim, 1995), analysis of sex, gender and power in South-east Asia also supports the view that there is complementarity in the work of men and women and identifies a 'relative lack of ritual and economic differentiation' in both mainland and island South-east Asia (p.1). All of these researches support the work of Komanyi (1972) in her ethnographic research on the Iban community in Sarawak. With



an in-depth study employing participant observation of and unstructured interviews with 100 females of varying ages in the community, she found the existence of a bilateral kinship system with both sexes equally important to the society.

In island South-east Asia, male and female power is not something that has to be publicly demonstrated as in the Western, European sense (Errington, 1989, cited by Karim, 1995). The forceful demonstration of power is a sign of weakness and 'diminishes prestige' (p.17). This, according to Karim (1995), is difficult for Europeans to understand, and exceedingly so for feminists, who see femininity, domestication and bedroom decision-making as ploys of the oppressed female (p.37). An additional strategy practised by women is the power of 'silence' (in contrast to public protests) and withdrawal (in contrast to affirmative action). Karim, speaking in the indigenous dialect, saw that in reality 'to do things through informal structures is the proper way, and one which is fully acceptable within the confines of 'adat''. Karim saw tensions existing between 'adat', which gave power to women, and male-dominated religions which kept women repressed and 'struggling to be free'. Tilak (1993), writing on women's education in East Asia, quotes Huq (1965) who observed that even though the region was becoming technologically developed, the importance of religion and tradition had not diminished. Observance of silence and withdrawal is clearly seen in a different light by those from the West who see it as repressive. In South-east Asia silence and withdrawal is seen as a strength which enables women to overcome challenges rather than confrontation which would not be applauded by society. Adherence to 'adat' which is buttressed by religion affirms their resolve and thus the continuance of this practice in the region. This study examines the extent to which 'adat' actually strengthens the resolve of women to aspire to management positions in spite of the barriers they have to overcome.

A significant factor, when looking at social equality and inequality which is at the heart of universalism in feminist thought, is the question of power. There is a divide between the Eastern and Western concept of power and according to Karim (1995), the ethnographic lens is made in Europe. She adds that the 'spare parts cannot be found in South-east Asia'. The interpretation of the picture presented is very often based on an understanding which might not be the true reflection of the actual or, in this context, as

a native perceives it. Realistically, there are bound to be elements of distortion and bias in interpretation even within the same culture which is differently located. Thus different cultural perceptions are difficult to reconcile. The idea that one can only start from the premise that power is distributed unequally and there exist gender hierarchies is not useful when considering societies in South-east Asia. Here, bilateralism and complementarity are significant if the structure of those societies is to be understood. Karim (1995), reviewing studies on women in Island South-east Asia, observed that bilaterality does not fit with defining power in decision making in terms of public and private. In investigating and explaining factors that facilitate or create barriers to advancement (especially for women) in the public sector in Malaysia, Janat (1993) draws on differences between the Equity Theory and Complementary Model. According to her, Equity Theory posits that women and men are equal in everything and should be given equal opportunities and access. She states that success should be measured quantitatively, that is, by the number of women at different ranks, salaries and status. On the other hand, the Complementary Model argues that there are differences between women and men but the contributions of one complements the other. This suggests that a qualitative assessment of their relative positions is as important as a quantitative one. Janat saw the particular relevance of the latter in the Malaysian context.

In relation to power and complementarity is visibility. Karim's (1992; 1995) anthropological research on women and culture established that 'women in South-east Asia are publicly visible; ... their inputs into politics and religion exist in the informal sphere; but this informal sphere is so visible and important that it is hard for social scientists to come up with one general statement to the effect that women are less important in politics and religion'. Van Esterik (1995) reaffirmed this point stating that 'in Southeast Asia, women's work is neither invisible nor undervalued' and women have traditionally grown up with the idea of work (p.253). Women in South-east Asia use their private space as a launching pad for their public space. From the South-east Asian perspective therefore, deferment, patience, spirituality, invisibility, transference and other social intangibles are intrinsic features of a South-east Asian social system, and become sources of resistance and strength (Karim, 1995:19). This contrasts with

Western society whereby outputs need to be quantitatively measured so visibility is important, as was pointed out by Janat (1993).

The review has revealed that the concept of bilateralism is of great significance in analysing women in educational management in the context of South-east Asian societies. Male and female divides are of less significance compared to seniority and eldership when respect is accorded. Significantly, there is no distinction in recognising women as well as men as leaders in a workplace. Visibility is not a key issue as a woman who is highly visible may not win society's approval, in which silence and withdrawal are favoured to register their disapproval. According to the literature there is no evidence to suggest a power struggle between the sexes in line with the theme of complementarity. Having made these points on bilateralism and its relevance to this study on women in educational management in Sarawak, an analysis of the role and status of women in context is to follow.

## **2.2 Status of Women and the Cultural Dimension**

This section attempts to look into the status of women in the relevant societies in Malaysia and particularly in Sarawak, and the importance attributed to the indigenous cultural domain.

There is no evidence in Western literature that 'indigenous' culture constitutes a barrier to the career progress of women in education as it may not have been an issue for concern (Coleman, 1996; Cunnison, 1994; Ozga, 1993; Evetts, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1989). In the context of this study, 'indigenous' refers to the people native to the land compared to non-indigenous ethnic groups. The natives preserve their culture whereas those who came into the country brought their own cultures and retained much of them even when they integrated with the natives of the area. Thus there are differences in the 'indigenous' and 'non-indigenous' cultures which are significant when attempting to understand the players in this study (this will be demonstrated when reviewing the

various ethnic groups). In a country where culture and tradition, defined as 'adat', permeates the lives of the people, this aspect needs careful consideration and insight when studying the careers of women in management. A focus on the cultural dimension contributes towards an understanding of societies' perceptions of women's involvement and participation in decision-making and leadership from a non-Eurocentric mirror.

Atkinson and Errington (1990 cited in Van Esterik, 1995) described South-east Asia as having been long identified as an area where women enjoy 'high status' - such that the 'aura of strength and competence of South-east Asian women survived colonialism' (p.248). They reached this conclusion by studying women's status in the economic sphere, inheritance rights and participation in decision making. It has been characterised as an area of complementarity of male and female ideologies particularly when compared with the male dominance characteristic of traditional Indian and Chinese societies. This implies the nature of the partnership between male and female, that they are seen to be working together to support, supplement and reciprocate instead of compete with each other. In Western societies the status of a woman is defined by her role as worker, mother, wife or daughter (in-law), to differentiate between productive and reproductive labour. In South-east Asia, however, the distinction between productive and reproductive labour, as explained in terms of their complementarity, is blurred. For example, in the West the preparation of food by women is viewed as the work of a subordinate while in the East the control of the food supply is considered to be an assertion of power, that is, they have economic control of the household. Therefore, the preparation of food can be viewed as a public act when carried out for financial gain and a political act in relation to the power it accrues. It is clear from this example that there cannot be assumed to be a superior status given to public compared to private acts. Yet the Western literature seems to say public and private are superior divisions thereby creating problems for women who want to work.

The discussion above will be more meaningful when deliberated within the context of the culture of the various ethnic groups in the study: the Malays, Ibans and Chinese.

### **2.2.1 Role and Status of Malay Women**

Karim (1995) makes the point that in Malay society, as well as the Island South-east Asian systems, Malay women have enjoyed a level of autonomy which enabled them to take part in politics and government (p.45). To understand the position of women within this society it is necessary to give some consideration to 'adat' and the historical background. Karim (1995) states that the integration and separation of 'adat' and Islam at different periods led to differences in Malay constructs of gender (p.44). From childhood Malay women and men learn their respective domains of activity in which women are identified with a "domestic" orientation and men with the "public" (Rohana, 1991). In order to understand the domestic orientation of women better, it is necessary to look at 'adat' which is the axis of social and cultural organisations in Malay society (p.18). 'Adat', as Asma's study of the Malay workforce and the importance accorded to tradition revealed, provides rules and expectations of appropriate behaviour relating to the cultural norms and values of society. These may be personal, interpersonal, intragroup or between groups. Most of these laws are based on Islamic beliefs and documents as well as tradition and custom. Rohana (1991) used a social and legal framework to explain that in order to define the status of Malay women it is necessary to understand the cultural constructs used in relation to gender. Within these constructs religion, in particular Islam, has to be given consideration because, in addition to race, religion is very important to Malays (p.20).

This study refers to women in the Borneon state of Sarawak whereas the literature available on the role and status of Malay women refers to the Malays in Peninsular Malaysia. Nevertheless, the Malays of Peninsular Malaysia are akin to those from Sarawak as they come from the same stock and share similar cultural practices. Therefore, the interpretation of the role of women is similar within the two groups. The Malays also share many similarities with the Melanaus, another ethnic group studied. There are, however, differing views even amongst the Malays themselves regarding the role of Malay women in traditional society. According to Karim (1992) different interpretations of the status of women in a society will occur when different groups within that society are studied. This is because class and ethnicity blur cultural and

religious boundaries. This results in a variety of ways in which people think and live within a community. For example, Saedah (1990) quoted the work done by Asiah Abu Samah (1960)<sup>1</sup> who stated that the place of women in traditional society was in the home where she had inferior status and was a submissive wife or obedient daughter. Saedah then went on to quote ethnographic researches by Strange (1981), Firth (1966), McAlister (1987) and Ong (1987) and found that women played an important role in production as well as men. From her study carried out in Rusila (Trengganu), Strange (1981) found that the role of women in production was of equal importance to that of men. McAlister (1987) conducted her research in Kuala Pilah, Negri Sembilan and stated that women are “central actors in the family life and also key participants in economic production and public life” (pp. 16-17). There are thus two contradicting views regarding the role of Malay women in traditional society: that women are passive and that women are actively involved in the community and in the work place. The differences in the views may be due to the time frame when the research was conducted and the nature of the research. Asiah’s (1960) was a dissertation and written before independence when many parents had not even considered education for their daughters as well as sons. Strange’s (1981) and McAlister’s (1987) researches were from an anthropological perspective and conducted in areas considered strong bastions of Malay cultures and, even as outsider researchers, they did observe the central role of women in these societies which refuted Asiah’s findings. Local writers, such as Rohana (1991), concurred with the findings of Strange and McAlister. Rohana noted that in the economic sphere, Malay women already occupied a significant place (p.23). They had been involved in the socio-economic activities of the traditional Malay society for centuries - their involvement in these social activities is indeed part of their culture. The fact that the Islamic family law of Malaysia recognises the right of the wife to have her share of property, which is acquired jointly during the marriage, clearly proves the real participation of Malay women in the socio-economic activities of the society. This clause is in conformity with the personal status of women, which is recognised by the Quran, that marriage does not, in general, affect the personal status of a Muslim woman (Faisal, 1993:182).

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<sup>1</sup> Asiah Abu Samah (1960)<sup>1</sup> in her academic exercise on Emancipation of Malay Women, 1945 -57

Faisal (1993) writing from a male perspective quoted R.O. Windstedt (an authority on Malayan History) who described Malay women as having enjoyed freedom of movement in society even before the coming of western colonialists. He noted that “the Malay woman goes abroad with her face uncovered, takes part in her husband’s affairs and exhibits her finery at festivals”. Since Malay women work together with their husbands to cultivate land, this has become part of their custom and tradition. Women’s participation in nation-building is, indeed, rooted in their culture and traditions for Malay culture and custom allow women to work, in order to earn money, side by side with their men and, at the present time, women are found in all professions and at all administrative levels. (Faisal, 1993:178)

Evidence of Malay women’s strong social status is provided by Firth (1995: 5-6) whose earlier research in 1966<sup>1</sup> suggested that while the European women are at a disadvantage when it comes to money matters because the husband controls the purse strings, Malay women clearly act as the banker in the family. The money earned by the husband goes to the woman to spend and save. She also observed the complementary gender relations amongst her subjects noting that the Kelantanese peasant women and those of Negri Sembilan have more social freedom than those from other states in the Peninsula (again reference to societies which are relatively more-steeped in tradition than other areas in the country).

Firth (1995) also observed that although to some extent women are still dependent on men, due to the fact that the obligation of supporting the family falls on men’s shoulders, this does not mean that women are prohibited from sharing the men’s burden. She found Malay women have continued to work and share the responsibility of maintaining the family as part of their custom and tradition for centuries. Their involvement in work is based on full awareness that, according to Islam, it is not prohibited for women to work and earn money. But as women in a traditional society living in traditional Malay villages, women’s participation in the workforce should be understood in its traditional context (p.160).

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<sup>1</sup> Rosemary Firth (1966) ‘Housekeeping Among the Malay Peasant’

In traditional Malay society, the care of children is the responsibility of the village elders, parents and other siblings irrespective of gender so this job is shared out amongst the community. There is evidence to suggest that men and women in traditional societies work together (the complementary theme referred to earlier). It was Strange (1981 cited in Saedah), for example, who suggested that in Rusila (Trengganu) the men baby-sit at home while women carry out business in the market place; the complementary model in place.

To sum up, the traditional occupations of Malay women are those of wives and mothers, but besides these roles they have always participated in the family workforce which, in a larger sense, is the workforce of the society. Malay women were already active in the society even before the idea of a women's liberation movement arose in the western world. It is true that most of the work in which women participated was related to agriculture, but this is simply because the Malay village has always been dependent on this. It is also true that traditionally, the single, unmarried Malay girls had less freedom than their brothers, but once a girl got married she had full freedom (Faisal, 1993:159). This is in relation to being virtuous on which the society places great emphasis. Thus the theme of dependent co-existence between male and female is evident in the discussion throughout, either in the social or economic sphere, the public as well as private. Malay women are well situated for further advancement whilst still preserving much of their traditional role. The cultural milieu of 'adat' has provided Malay women with a keen sense of independence, mobility, entrepreneurship and (with seniority and age) prestige. Islam has been interpreted in different ways throughout its history but it is only when it is presented by fundamentalists or is patriarchal that Malay women have experienced increased male domination (Karim, 1995:44).

### **2.2.2 The Position and Status of Iban Women**

In Iban culture the keynote seems to be equality. In the longhouse communities "true" democracy prevails because there is equality between the sexes which creates equality in the society. In the society and political organisations there is no class distinction; a man or woman may become the head of the longhouse. In religion there are equally important male and female deities; in rituals men and women participate together, and in life crises there are no differences in the ceremonies performed for women or men. (Komanyi, 1972: 127)



In the context of this study the researcher uses Komanyi's (1972) anthropological study of the Iban community to illustrate the importance attributed to indigenous culture as the Iban community constitutes the largest ethnic group in Sarawak. The Ibans' whole way of life is governed by their subsistence economy and by religious practices connected with the paddy growing culture in which women are often more active than their men. The family and community generally does not favour one sex over the other, perhaps because in the Iban bilateral kinship system both sexes are equally important to the society. Her findings show that from childhood on the Iban girl is being enculturated, under her grandmother's guiding hand, toward becoming a vital and equal participant within her society (p.72). In conferences held for marriages and funerals, as well as for any other occasion when everyone in the longhouse is involved, women speak freely, put forth proposals, and make comments (p.83).

The above findings suggest that the visibility of women is an accepted feature in Iban 'adat'. In comparing what was actually observed by Komanyi, the findings show that ideally Iban women are not only permitted to participate in all decision-making conferences, but their presence is in fact of vital importance. Because the women often assume total responsibility during the absence of their husbands, conferences concerning longhouse matters absolutely require the women's presence. Komanyi's informants claimed that all important decisions are made by women and men together, and all work is shared between them. The activity of women in Iban society is, ideally, based on women and men sharing the decision-making and working the land together. However, as the findings indicate, women have a more vital role in all the activities in the longhouse community since it is customary for men to 'bejalai' (go on a journey for a few months or years). Thus, the status of a woman in Iban society is 'at least equal' to that of a man, and is often enhanced by the society's demands. When the men go on their 'bejalai' the wives take up the dual roles of father and mother in the family. In agriculture, ideally, women and men follow a pattern of division of labour. Female informants often said that they share the work with the men and did not state a preference for one type of work over another because their families can survive only if they perform the tasks traditionally assigned to them. Working alongside men (complementarity) it was not necessary to prove they are equal. In reality, because of the

'bejalai' tradition, women are often left in charge of the farm. Leadership within the longhouse is exercised by the 'tuai rumah' (headman). Although either man or woman can become 'tuai rumah', not many women have achieved this position since like the Malays, they, too, acknowledge the husband as head of the household, the authority figure. Although equality seems to be the practice, what is recognised and acknowledged by the community is the complementarity in a male-female relationship.

Komanyi's study which included interviews with some Sarawak Malays, because of the close proximity between the two ethnic groups, also revealed that although the Ibans live in close contact with the Malays and have many cultural traits in common, there are, nevertheless, distinct differences between their life styles, for example in the treatment of women. Komanyi, citing Wilson (1967) noted that publicly the Malay male has a higher 'status' than the female, but privately this may not be so (p.112). This suggests that status differences does not exist among the Ibans. Komanyi's study further revealed that Malay women are treated with respect by their husbands and children in the home, but they can only participate in decision-making when they reach the age of 40 or have finished child bearing whereas the Iban women are involved much earlier. This suggests that Iban women are treated as equals by their male counterparts and are accorded a higher status when compared to Malay women with their involvement in decision making.

Komanyi concluded that while many Iban traditional practices are diminishing and western influences are increasing, the basic concept of 'equality' within Iban culture seems to remain. The acceptance of change, such as formal education, affects both sexes equally. Thus, a girl is not bound by tradition to devote her life solely to the family and to household duties. She is supported and encouraged to continue her education and is not denied the opportunity of obtaining a job away from her community. The acceptance of this change does not destroy the basic values of the society, rather, it enhances the Ibans' survival.

### 2.2.3 The Position of Chinese Women in the Family

This discussion is based on Ng's (1977) case study research comparing two residential areas in Penang, Malaysia and that of Stockman et al's (1995)<sup>1</sup> large-scale research comparative study of industrialised countries. Ng's study depicts the traits of the Chinese in Malaysia, whereas Stockman and colleagues' questionnaire survey was conducted in Mainland China.

Ng's (1977) findings pointed to the traditional Chinese ideal of women only performing the household work of caring and raising children, marketing, cooking, washing and ironing, cleaning the house and other duties. The traditional women, ideally, should therefore abstain from non-household work and assume the role of full-time housewives (p.139). Income earning is the realm of the men and household work that of women and the two spheres are clearly demarcated; the hierarchical system. Work outside the family household should never become the principal productive work of Chinese women. The productive labour of women, should therefore, be overwhelmingly confined to the home. The wife was in the family to care for her husband's household, raise his children and to serve the husband's parents. Women still recognise, strictly, the traditional concept of the division of labour, that is, a woman's role is expressly in the home while a man's role is instrumental in establishing a relationship with the external world. She also explained that the attitude of Chinese society has been that men should not help in domestic tasks. Such an attitude is reinforced by the community believing that it is not necessary for the husband to help (p.149). This is similar to the Western hierarchical system, as opposed to bilateralism which exists in the indigenous Malaysian cultures.

The study by Stockman et al (1995) put forward a different argument that, unlike in Japan, the U.K. and the U.S.A., in China the separation of enterprise (the world of work) from household has not taken place. Whether the authors were discussing women's participation in paid employment, domestic divisions of labour or attitudes towards the employment of mothers of young children, contrary to Ng's findings, theirs

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<sup>1</sup> Stockman, Bonney & Zuewen (1995), *Women's work in East and West* which looks into the issue of Dual Burden of Employment and Family Life. This study involved four countries - China, Japan, UK and US.

reveal that in China there is less gender segregation than in the other three societies. Another contradiction to Ng's findings relates to the greater involvement of Chinese men in domestic labour and childcare than in the other three countries. The fact that the studies were conducted in two different countries may account for the differences in findings, nevertheless the Chinese in Malaysia continued to retain a lot of their culture and traditions. A more acceptable explanation for these discrepancies is that Stockman and colleagues' study focused on women in industrial societies while in China a large proportion of the population is rural. Therefore, their findings may be limited in their reliability.

Ng (1977) made the point that mothers and grandmothers, especially of the lower income groups (class consciousness is based on economic differences), were known to work to augment the family income. Such work was based on self-employment and found within the area of residence, such as hawking, market selling and running small sundry shops. If, however, Chinese women work beyond the confines of their home, they are generally involved in domestic work (p.158). Ng stated that lower class women are only part-time housewives since they were involved in work beyond the home and combined the traditional roles of housewife and worker for the family. Culturally permissible jobs are those which are found within the house and residential compound, in which women can involve themselves during their spare time only and which do not prevent them from fulfilling their primary role of caring for their husband's household. For working women of the middle income group, although they still look upon management of domestic activities as their rightful role, this does not take precedence over their careers. Her findings indicate that the women prefer a career to devoting themselves to housework (p.162). Unlike women in the lower income group, housework is not looked upon as the primary role by those women who have a choice between housework and a career. Therefore, unlike the lower income group where non-household work is an additional role for the women, in the middle income group household work is becoming the additional role. Ng found that even though the women in the middle income group conceded that their husbands would not 'tackle housework in a conspicuous fashion', they helped with housework within the privacy of their homes (p.162). Contrary to the societies observed earlier, work was not as visible among the

Chinese women and is not given high status. It is differentiated from the culturally permissible jobs of the Ibans and Malays described earlier.

The literature review has so far revealed that while there are similarities between the indigenous cultures of the Malays and Ibans, pertaining to the role and status of women, there are, however, more differences than there are similarities with those of the traditional Chinese. Dissimilarities are seen in the status accorded women as well as their involvement in the economic sphere, financial control, work outside the home and participation in decision making. Bilateralism exists for the Malays and Ibans who conform to a complementary model in the home and work place. Traditional Chinese practices cannot reconcile work and home but emerging trends among the younger generation are gradually eroding this cultural norm. Today, housework no longer seems to stand in the way of the advancement of women.

### **2.3 Advancement of Women - Women in Management and Women in Educational Management**

This section draws on literature from both Malaysia and the West. There was limited local literature on women in management, particularly, women in educational management in Malaysia so the Western literature was used to explain this phenomenon as well as to see the parallels and dissimilarities in the career paths of women in the two spheres. It examines the barriers to the career paths of women, and the development and promotion of women to managerial roles that would lead to their advancement in society and give them power. Where 'adat' is significant, this will be highlighted, otherwise the factors are treated as present in both Malaysia and the West.

One strand that runs through the literature on the subject of women in management and in particular women in educational management relates to the personal and professional experiences of the women studied. The writers have had experience both of being managed and of being in management positions (Asmah, 1996, 1993; Hing and Rokiah, 1986; Jamilah, 1992; Hall, 1996; Marshall, 1995, 1984; Adler et al, 1993). In their writings, in relating the experiences of their subjects, they are in many ways also

bringing their own experience to their research. Their familiarity with the subject matter means that they have an insight to the work being undertaken and can sustain their interest long enough to complete a project. That biography shapes the topic choice means that the researched area is of interest to the researcher since much research is grounded in personal and political biography (Marshall, 1984: 5). The problem lies in the tendency to make generalisations across culture based on their 'familiarity' with the topic which may not apply to the context of the study. Interpretation is very much based on the researcher's own experience. This study is generated by the researcher's experience as an educational manager in Sarawak and her interest in examining the challenges that women managers face taking into account the different cultural context.

It is well noted that studies of women in management use subjects who are successful in their respective professions (Asmah, 1996, Fatimah, 1993; Hennig and Jardim, 1977; Hall, 1996; Marshall, 1994; White et al, 1992). This is because of the lessons that can be learnt from such women's experiences of overcoming barriers to their careers as well as the interest generated in success stories. For example, White et al's (1992) study looked at the experiences of successful women from which it was hoped it would be possible to identify barriers to success and to indicate ways to overcome them. But much is to be learnt from those who did not succeed. The present study is of women who have been promoted or offered promotion and examines their perceptions of traditional and professional roles as well as the challenges they face in combining them. Interviews with the spouses of these women gave the opportunity to learn how they viewed their wives' traditional and professional roles and the conflict between them. In this way the perspective of the other affected member of the family was gained. By including those who had rejected promotion, the study tries to identify obstacles to their career paths.

A phenomenon that is found in Malaysia, as elsewhere, is that more than half of primary and half of secondary teachers are female. The number, however, involved in management, power and authority (only 7.9% of School Heads in Malaysia, 11.7% of administrators in the Ministry of Education (MOE)) hardly matches their representation in the workforce. These figures need to be understood in the historical context of girls' participation in education in Malaysia. Jamilah (1994) commented that it is ironic to find

that although women make up the majority of staff in the MOE, only a small number of them are found in the higher echelons of the service, especially those involving management and policy making (p.361). Researching in her own institution on women in leadership positions, Asmah (1996) revealed that female professors and associate professors made up 22% and 33% respectively of the number in the university. She stated that though there is now a move towards greater female participation at lecturer level, she had reservations about the future representation of women in top management (p.8). Hall's (1993) review of research on this topic in the U.K. showed that women are the minority in senior posts in schools and colleges even though they are 60% of the workforce. The increase in the number of women who are senior managers in LEAs can be attributed, in her view, to equal opportunities policies and the 'concomitant lowering of status of LEAs'. When men are not attracted to the posts, women gain opportunities. Fatimah's (1993) interview of 110 selected successful women in various fields in Malaysia, attributed the smaller ratio of women in higher level employment to their late entry into the professions as well as, in some fields, education and training. She also observed that women's preference to seek 'traditionally feminine occupations and levels' (as in teaching, nursing, secretaryship) was a contributing factor. This suggests that women do go for management positions when doors are opened for them by having the right qualifications and training and a policy of affirmative action in favour of women.

In examining the development of women's careers, there is evidence to suggest that many of the successful women in both Malaysia and Western societies, did not plan their careers at all or made a late commitment to them. White et al's (1992) study quotes other researches (Hennig and Jardim, 1977; Adams, 1984) and points to reasons such as family commitments and choosing work which can accommodate their domestic situation. Interest in advancement comes with the realisation that they enjoy their jobs (pp.104-6). Grant (1989) researching how successful women viewed their careers, found that their late promotions could be explained by their fulfilment of roles, which met the expectations of society, in their earlier working lives. Asmah (1996) discussed the presence of a 'gender based filter'<sup>1</sup> in the selection of candidates to top managerial

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<sup>1</sup> Professor Sheryl L. Bond in her draft paper (undated), *The Feminine Experience of Leadership*, discusses filters operating in the selection of women to influential positions.

roles. According to her, there is an inherent belief in all cultures of the ethnic groups studied that the men must lead. This is not an expression of a belief that men have or should have more power but of the belief that someone must be a leader and that is usually a man. The women leaders themselves expressed their hesitation to aspire to leadership positions knowing that men would get preference in these posts. Bearing in mind that there are differences in the ethnic composition of those in her study (Malay, Chinese and Indians), and those respondents of this study (Malay, Ibans and Chinese), one point they agree on is that men are the head of the household. Her finding supported her earlier anecdotal study (Asmah, 1993) on similar issues in which she reasoned that 'the attitude seems to link to the backdrop of male domination in the society'. The attitude within these societies is, therefore, that men are the authority in the family and generally assume leadership in the society. However, it does not mean that women are not allowed to lead.

Another filter which Asmah (1993) identified relates to personality and the extent to which this makes women visible in the workforce. She concluded that women need to be seen, that is, have a high profile, in order to be considered for appointment to leadership positions. However, she found that 'women who are loud, who want to be superwomen, as well as women who are too ladylike (not assertive)' are excluded. Her findings show that in higher education in Malaysia, there are constraints on women aspiring to leadership positions. These relate to the present monopoly of power being held by men and a lack of female confidence (Asmah, 1996:8). Asmah also remarked that generally women do not want to get involved in debates and discussions over controversial issues. Asmah's studies were of a university whose politics and scenario differ from that in schools. This study, however, focuses on schools where women heads are visible within the community and its environment. This is because a school is a smaller world and may be less threatening than a university. This portrayal of women, seen from a general management perspective (often Western and male-norm referenced), as lacking visibility (thus few in leadership positions) is not seen in the same light as the anthropological perspective of bilateralism which was discussed earlier. What the literature did not reveal is the importance that traditionalists attach to religion which would throw some light on the religious perspective on women in leadership roles. Comparisons can then



be made between the religious and cultural perceptions. This is an area which this study tries to explore. Davies and Gunawardena's (1992) study of the perceptions and orientations of developing countries (including Malaysia) of women and men in educational development saw the need for women in the developing countries studied to be persuaded into management positions, but for different reasons. She explains:

The perception that a head is 'above' a colleague is problematic for the teacher who prefers collegiality, and who sees their prime tasks and training as dealing with students, not sorting out the problems and challenges of adults.

(p.80)

Thus attitudes to promotion vary with individuals and some teachers might find more satisfaction as a classroom teacher than as a manager and value their instructional function.

Related to the question of visibility is the question of power. Asmah (1996) described her respondents' attitudes towards power by stating that women in Malaysia are not interested in power for its own sake but accept it as a duty which has to be done. She summarised this finding as follows:

"Men concern themselves with the power vested in them and they vie for the leadership positions with power in their minds. It seems to be a high achievement for them to be able to boss people around. The idea of power does not come to the women at the point of appointment. With most women, power does not consume them even during the course of carrying out their duties. Their main concern is to do the job. And they are more interested in completing their job on time and getting everyone's approval. They fight shy of the word 'power'" (p.8)

Hall's (1996) study which explores the triple metaphor of power, culture and gender in educational management, reinforces the above quotation by stating that women heads expressed their discomfort in exercising their power as a head. 'Power for' was preferred to 'power over' (pp.143-145). The heads in her study were aware of the power that came with their position but are fearful of its implications and use. Thus they are very conscious of 'using their power' appropriately to avoid abuse, misuse and overuse. Generally women managers resort to empowering their subordinates, thus power is shared with their deputies and middle managers.

Studies cited by Shakeshaft, 1989, (Dias, 1975; Goerss, 1975; Miller, 1976; Sample, 1977; William, 1977), seem to suggest that women's lack of success in obtaining

administrative positions is due to lower aspirations or lack of motivation. Shakeshaft (1989) questioned whether internal barriers, that is, the 'women factor' (low self-image, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation or aspiration) can be blamed for women's lack of advancement. Instead, she saw the structure of society with the private sphere (for women) and public sphere (for men) as the root cause of inequities (p.83). Ruijs (1993), examining the different attitudes and abilities of women managers in education world-wide referred to the 'deeply entrenched societal attitudes about the roles of men and women as leaders and followers'. In this respect Asmah (1993) writing in a Malaysian context but using the Western framework attributed the reluctance of women in higher education to assume leadership positions to similar reasons. Such presumptions inherent in hierarchical structures form barriers to competent women assuming leadership roles. Marshall (1984) and Al-Khalifa (1989) considered that the reluctance of many women to move into management roles was due to their identification of masculinity with management. Davies (1992) expressed reservations about such findings. She recognised that in the various sex-difference researches world-wide, much of the problem is that such research may not finally be interpreted as 'differences' but as 'deficits'. She remarked:

"there is an implicit tendency to present the male-as-norm in management terms, and to see where women differ from this. They are perhaps 'less' ambitious, 'lacking' in confidence, 'over' emotional, 'too' family centred, or 'under' achieving. The net result is unintentionally to confirm that ambition, overconfidence and maximal achievement are universal goods, and that emotions and orientations to family are somehow barriers and handicaps".  
(p.18)

Davies encapsulated the dangers of generalisations based on the norm-reference whereby it may not be applicable arising out of cultural differences (pp.17-18).

More recent studies, however, do not agree with earlier findings that women do not aspire to win promotion. Cunnison (1994) studying the aspirations of women relating to the three top posts in schools, by comparing the findings in 1978 with those of 1987, found that they had a greater interest in advancement at the later date. She noted that women's expectations of promotions are now greater as is their belief in their right to pursue a career. In the earlier findings many women teachers wished to remain in the classroom but now increasing numbers express an interest in advancement into

managerial roles (p.84). Fatimah (1993) found that most of her “successful women” indicated that if they had the opportunity, they would like to further their education for their own development as well as to have the opportunity to move up the career ladder. When asked to identify the single most important factor that contributed to their success, her respondents ranked “my own effort” highest with “my education” a close second followed by “my character”. Of those who cited “family” as the most important factor (19.4%), it was fathers and husbands who were the most influential family members. Her finding are shown in Table 2.1:

**Table 2.1 Respondents’ Perception of the Single Most Important Factor that Contributed to their Success**

	Factors	F	%
1	My character	12	12.2
2	Own efforts	28	28.6
3	Education	25	25.5
4	Training	1	1.0
5	Family		
	5.1 Mother	2	2.0
	5.2 Father	7	7.1
	5.3 Sisters	0	0.0
	5.4 Brothers	0	0.0
	5.5 Husband	6	6.1
	5.6 Children	0	0.0
	5.7 Other Relatives (Natal)	4	4.1
	5.8 Other Relatives (of husband)	0	0.0
6	Family Influence	6	6.1
7	Government Policies	1	1.0
8	Coincidence	2	2.0
9	9.1 Role Model	4	4.1
	9.2 Employer Support	0	0.0
	9.3 Other	0	0.0
	N =	98	100

(Source: Fatimah Hamid Don, 1993)

The findings suggest that these successful women believe in their own ability in their quest for success, and that ‘adat’ has not barred them from exploiting their potential. In fact, a significant proportion considered family influence, particularly fathers and husbands, are crucial factors accounting for their success in their careers. The questionnaire in this study gave the opportunity to examine why some women managers

do not go for promotion and to identify factors that encouraged others to seek it in Sarawak.

White et al's (1992) study relates its findings, like those of Fatimah's 'belief in their own ability', to an 'internal locus of control' (p.217) as the main motivating factor in women's advancement. Hall (1996) discussed 'an inner locus of control' among women heads in her study and her review of the literature on similar subjects (1997) and shows this as characteristic of successful women managers in education. She defines inner locus of control as 'having high self-efficacy beliefs which are reinforced by successful performance, leading to further belief that success is contingent on behaviour in the job and not luck or fate or 'who you know''.

Fatimah's (1993) findings revealed that the factors that influenced "successful" women were, in order of importance: father, mother, national priorities, siblings, husband and male peer, female peer, female teacher, male teacher and the media. The prominence of parental influence on educational and career aspirations is clearly established. Hall (1996) also established the significance of parental influence (particularly that of the father) on women managers' achievement and success. In her review of literature on gender and educational leadership, she saw the influence of both parents as role models. In this study, family factors - fathers', mothers' and husbands' blessing (in line with 'adat') and encouragement are examined to assess their importance to the success of the women managers.

The presence or absence of role models, mentors and networking are some other themes identified in the literature as influencing aspiration to leadership positions. Janat's (1993) investigation illustrated the importance of having other women in senior positions to aspiring women. This is consistent with Fatimah's (1993) analysis of contributing factors to the success of her respondents who identified a role model, usually a successful person (though not specific to a particular gender) as an important contributing factor. These findings parallel White et al's (1992) and Ruijs (1993 quoting works of Randell and Rumbold) who discussed the lack of role models and sponsors for women while these exist for men. Evetts' (1990) study of women in primary teaching described the

encouragement that those in senior positions can offer to junior colleagues as "advice of gatekeepers" (p.150). The benefits which can be gained by having mentors is outlined by Janat (1993 citing Noe 1988). She observed that both women and men report having mentors of both sexes. Thus, the mentor-mentee relationship is well established and is not gender specific. White et al's (1992) findings suggest that mentors could increase self confidence and act as role models. Dunlap and Schmuck (1995) supported mentoring as an aid which helps women to climb the career ladder while Grant (1989) and Evetts (1994) found that sponsorship assisted promotion irrespective of gender. Networking is identified as a means of promoting self confidence and improving performance. Fatimah (1993) found networking ranked as the fifth most important factor, after hardwork, education, training and choice of careers, contributing to success. Asmah (1996) remarked that women do not use their networking skills to their own advantage but are prepared to utilise them when they are not the direct beneficiaries. In her research (1996) she attributed women academics' lack of awareness of their market value to the absence of networking among themselves. All the three elements, that is, role models, mentors and networking are important to a woman's success just as they are significant for men. In this study, the questionnaire and interviews were used to establish attitudes of women managers to role models, mentors and networking and how these factors contributed to their advancement as managers.

Another theme that emerges in the literature is that aspiring women managers have to be seen to work harder than men to counteract sex role stereotyping and to "prove themselves" to others. Janat's (1993) study showed that both women and men follow similar work schedules with the majority working between 41 to 50 hours per week. As expected, the work load increased with advancement. It was not found that women worked more hours than men but many women interviewed considered they worked harder and this was confirmed by a number of men. This sense of having 'worked harder' might be due to the role conflict which women face if they have the burden of housework to cope with in addition to their professional duties. This will be discussed in the work-role conflict section of this chapter.

Some of the factors mentioned above are present in both the Malaysian and Western context. Where 'adat' makes a significant contribution, such as in the importance accorded to the blessing of parents and husbands, this has been illustrated. The literature on women in management in Malaysia was not culture-specific but instead referred to women across cultures. Thus it was not possible to distinguish cultural differences within Malaysian society in most instances. This will be addressed in the discussion chapter when findings from this study are incorporated. Having looked at factors which influence women seeking promotion, or act as barriers to that promotion, the next section of the review examines the extent to which conflict arising from the combining of professional and traditional roles can impede professional advancement.

## **2.4 Role Conflict: The Art of Juggling**

From interviews with 100 married women from ten professional groups and of varying ages and work experience, Fatimah (1985) analysed the role conflict of women in work in the early 1980's and put forward this view of one respondent:

"I am too preoccupied with work. Thus when I finish work in the office, I do my housework such as preparing dinner, sort out clothing to be put in the washing machine. After that I spend time with my children since I have left them with my helper the whole day long. Due to time constraints, sometimes I do not have time to read newspapers or magazines or involve myself in my hobby which I have since set aside."

(translated)

Levinson's (1960 cited in Fatimah, 1985) identification of a woman's social role as 'her own perception of what the society expects of her' and the role obligation expected by social structures, saw that a successful woman who can assume all the roles expected of her, is likely to experience role strain due to role conflict. Using a similar argument, White et al (1992 citing Hawley 1971) stated that career women can experience role conflict when they have difficulty in leaving behind the role of housewife and mother (p.188). Hall (1972 cited in Fatimah, 1985), on the other hand, stressed that the role conflict faced by married women is due to their multiple roles and that there is role overload when they meet the demands of their employers and their families (pp. 81-83). Nagaraj (1995) explained this juggling between work and home as 'a trade-off between

career and time for children' and added the extra responsibility of caring for her elderly parents to a mother's multiple roles (p.18). All the above arguments subscribe to Valdez and Gutek's (1987 cited in White, 1992) identification of the Role Theory conflict which suggests that the added demands of family are a hindrance to a woman's career. Similarly, there would also be role conflict or role strain or role overload if career takes precedence over private life. Janat (1993 citing Hochschild, 1989; Valdez and Gutek, 1989) expressed support for the role accumulation and role conflict theories by arguing that the interdependence of work and family is problematic for adults in general but women in particular, especially those who aspire to be or are managers. Hence there are many roles that women play in their dual role as mother and worker, and all the more so with increased responsibilities as managers. Bilateralism takes into account the family structure in place in an agricultural system and the presence of extended family support which enables both husband and spouse to work in the field. Work outside of 'traditional work', together with the absence of the extended family especially in urban areas, means that role conflict is real for Malaysian women and is a problem working women have to resolve. Fatimah's (1985) quote on the previous page reflects the feelings of many women who have to perform this juggling act. This study through questionnaires, interviews and time-log diaries tries to assess whether such experiences are phenomena identified by women educational managers in Sarawak.

Contrary to the above findings, Piotrkowski (1979 cited in White et al, 1992) found that several women felt that career and family could be mutually enhancing, the 'positive carry over' from family to work and vice versa (p.206). Their satisfaction at work enabled them to have satisfactory relations with family members both emotionally and socially. Fatimah (1985) found that her respondents experienced insufficient time to assume multiple roles as wife, mother and worker, but reasoned that the role conflict they experienced was not serious and widespread. They had strategies which included having support systems, good time management, resulting in defined work and family time, and supportive husbands to reduce and eliminate conflict. Many of her participants had positive role models in their mothers who worked and they knew that women could successfully combine domestic duties with work outside the home. Davies and Gunawardena's (1992) study found that 'the family occupies a central place for the

orientations and ambitions of both sexes. It is not a predominantly female concern' (p.71). Their findings also demonstrated that 'the family is not something which recognisably or inevitably holds women back during their teaching career'. This suggests that it is generally acknowledged that combining work and family is a heavy responsibility for working women but many women coped well and did not count family as a barrier, even when they did the housework as well.

Fatimah's study (1993) revealed that the majority (73%) of career women in her study perform a maximum of 30% of all housework, while a few, especially the unmarried, claimed they did all the housework. This claim was later modified as they employed cleaning services periodically. Her findings show that the majority of husbands (72%) did 20% or more of the housework and sons and daughters made their contribution too. It was common for the women in the study to have resident domestic help who undertook 60 - 80% of the housework. Husna (1997), examining the strategies and programmes to support working parents, reported that in the Malaysian experience, 'working women continue to retain the responsibility of overseeing domestic and family work' (the authority over the house is preserved). Only amongst the younger age cohort do the men partake in family management and household activities. This she compared to studies overseas which revealed that the employed wife's work-overload ranged to between two to six times higher than that of the husband's work load. This compares to Fuchs (1988 cited in White et al's 1992) who suggested that although 'childcare and women's economic equality are inextricably intertwined', women still prioritise their roles as mother and home-maker. This is explained in terms of 'recourse to biology and the early bonding between mother and child' (pp. 184-5). Researching how the successful women viewed their careers, Grant (1989) suggested it was inappropriate to expect the majority of women to persist in adopting a single-minded approach to career advancement (p.41). Her survey showed motherhood is a highly valued role, indicating that there are variations to the idea of self fulfilment. Marshall (1984) made a similar observation that for women work does not take priority over all other areas of life. Similar findings were observed by Aryee (1992) in his study on antecedents and outcomes of work-family conflict amongst 354 married professional women in Singapore. His findings showed that housework and childcare still remain the



responsibility of the women and the majority are willing to continue in their career, but motherhood gets the priority over work. This suggests that in most societies women by tradition retain their authority over household matters although it is not uncommon for spouses to help with the housework.

White and her colleagues (1992) contradicted Marshall by stating that work is central to the lives of successful women. Citing observations made by Rapoport and Rapoport (1980), that more women are combining work and family, White et al (1992) observed that more men are said to be adopting 'a family-oriented' approach to life, sometimes at the expense of career advancement (p.187). They quoted Astin (1985) who hinted at the opening up of occupational boundaries to both men and women with a multiplicity of roles for both. An earlier study by Killian (1952 cited in Fatimah, 1985), stated that women experience greater conflict than men in their multiple roles. Unlike women who juggle the domestic role and work roles, men assume their separate roles at different times. Cunnisson's (1994) study, while showing the increasing prominence given to the wives' careers by their spouses, found that for women the 'husband's career has been and remained the most important item' (p.90). Drawing on literature on women managers as well as research on the subject, Parasuraman (1993), examining the life style of women managers in the U.S., observed the impact on wives, who try to balance career and family, of their husbands' attitude and behaviour. On the one hand the wives adjusted their career prospects to accommodate their husband's career needs and perceptions. On the other hand, supportive husbands restructure their jobs to allow them to be more involved in family activities, and adjust their life styles to meet family needs. Supportive spouses may 'encourage their wives to pursue their career needs by embracing the success that their wives achieve' (p.197). These findings are consistent with the hierarchical structure of the society. The questionnaire and interview in the study gave the opportunity to explore how the women and their spouses view motherhood or the traditional role of women.

A woman who has multiple roles and duties can combine them successfully when she can delegate those tasks which can be carried out by somebody else. This means that she can be supported in the home by a spouse willing to share domestic responsibilities or by

hired help or she may have a support-network extending beyond the home. The next section will examine the support structure for working women.

## **2.5 Support for Working Women**

Tracing the historical development in a cross-cultural analysis of women, education and development in Malaysia, Grace (1996) observed the various coping strategies women adopted to overcome the dilemma of role conflict. These included recruiting domestic help and, especially among younger couples, sharing household chores (p.138). As had been discussed, the family, particularly the husband, can be a source of support for the woman's advancement in her career. White et al (1992) found the 'high flyers' acknowledged the importance of the family as the social support system. The presence of a supportive spouse provided 'the firm home base which was the secret of their success'. Their study found only 12% of the respondents' partners helped in the running of the household. Noor Laily's (1984), survey of 499 women and men on childcare needs of low income women, gave these findings:

Malay men help with basic tasks, cleaning, marketing, washing clothes and even cooking, twice as much as Chinese men, with the Indian men between the two. Husbands of working women help with household tasks more often than the husbands of women who do not work. Husbands' participation in household and child care activities is greater in relation to tasks such as entertaining children, helping with their school work and doing marketing. (p.91)

This finding corroborated the complementary model of the indigenous cultures discussed earlier. Thus the contribution from the family, the husband and children, in whatever form, greatly assists in the women's career advancement so that they need not make a choice between career over family or vice versa.

Besides household work, the other problems currently faced by working mothers concern the care of children. This subject of childcare has been much discussed at all levels of society and changes within society make it a pressing problem. More working mothers, decreasing family size, emergence of more nuclear families in place of the traditional extended family and the difficulty of getting child minders mean that new

forms of childcare have to be found. Fatimah’s (1993) study of successful women showed that working mothers do not entirely delegate the work of childcare to others, but instead share it with husbands, other relatives and domestic help. Her findings show that the career women tend to do between 30 - 40% of childcare work, with husbands 20 - 30% and more are now using the services of childcare centres. Husna (1997) whose sources are from researches covering a broader economic spectrum observed that failure to find satisfactory child care arrangements for families who lack a family support system has been quoted as the main reason (23%) for women in Malaysia, both urban and rural mothers alike, to drop out of work. Other reasons are ‘do not want to work’ (10%), ‘husband disapproves’ (8%), and household responsibilities (8%). Noor Laily’s (1984) study in the early 1980s revealed that child care facilities were felt to be the most serious family-related problem caused by, or exacerbated by, women working (p.85) as depicted in the table below:

**Table 2.2 Family Related Problems Caused by Women Working**

	Families of Non-Working Mothers		Families of Working Mothers	
	Wives (N= 250)	Husbands (N=250)	Wives N=249)	Husbands (N=240)
No Problems	2.0	2.4	4.8	3.8
Child Care	94.8	94.0	94.0	91.3
Husband Neglected	10.8	12.4	5.6	12.1
Chores neglected	18.0	16.8	12.9	19.2
No free time	2.0	-	-	-
Tired	2.8	-	2.4	-
Less affection from child	2.4	2.4	-	0.8
Cannot concentrate on work	1.2	-	1.2	-
Others	7.6	6.8	5.6	5.0

*(Source : Noor Laily Abu Bakar, 1984)*

These findings show the importance given to childcare by working women. Janat (1993) remarked that the Malaysian Government has recently assumed responsibility for childcare. A section of the General Orders governing employment and employees provides for subsidised day care centres to be set up in all government departments but this has yet to be put in place in most of them. In this study, questions on perceptions of childcare and its effects on their careers are asked in the interviews with the women managers and their spouses to gauge the extent to which it has affected their career movements.

Flexitime, which allows a woman to work at those times she finds convenient if she is to combine her domestic and professional duties to her satisfaction, is an innovation that is being increasingly used by working women. Tan's (1991) survey of all the 25 Ministries and selected Departments and Statutory Bodies, researching on the status and role of Malaysian women in development and family welfare, found that a high proportion of senior male executives believed that female workers with young children should be allowed flexitime but not male workers with young children (p.58). Husna (1997) also proposed that flexible work time be introduced which included flexible starting and finishing times, varying amounts of time worked, different venues and scheduling of hours worked over a day, week or longer period. This is on account of Christensen and Staines (1990) studies which related the positive relationship of flexitime to increased effectiveness in organisations. She quoted Ronen (1984) who showed the positive contribution of flexitime to reduced absenteeism, tardiness and turn over rates. Flexitime is not a feature of the Malaysian civil service as yet but nevertheless questions were asked in the questionnaire on whether they would rate flexible working time as one of the three factors which would assist and improve their performance.

A career-break is a strategy proposed by some researchers, which can be used to advantage by women. It is welcomed by those who want to raise children but findings show that it can act as a stumbling block to woman's advancement in their careers (Evetts, 1990: pp. 92 - 94; Grant, 1989) especially if length of service is a criterion for promotion. Tan's (1991) survey indicated that there was support for increasing maternity leave and for allowing women to take unpaid leave at its end. However, there was less support from male Department Heads for allowing women who had left the service to rejoin later without loss of seniority (disadvantage of taking career breaks) (pp. 57-58). Fatimah's (1993) study revealed very few cases of career interruptions on account of marriage, child birth or child raising, this is not a common practice in Malaysia.

Until recently civil servants in Malaysia were allowed 42 days maternity leave on up to five occasions (extended from three previously). This maternity leave, observed Jamilah (1992), can work against women on certain occasions as it was then held that frequent

absences would disrupt the organisations and lead to reduction of employment opportunities for women. However, she noticed that in the private sector women employees were given two months maternity leave without restriction on the number of confinements (p.58). She questioned the logic of passing on the economic cost of biological reproduction to the family in general, and to women in particular. In her view biological reproduction should be viewed as a public investment and given the same funding accorded to health, educational and welfare activities. (Recently the Malaysian Government finally approved 60 days' paid maternity leave for all civil servants which is similar to that enjoyed in the private sector). Though it is long overdue, the willingness of the authority to extend maternity leave and synchronise it with that of the private sector suggests their concern for and acknowledgement of women's contribution to the economy. The interviews gave this researcher the opportunity to elicit the opinions of the managers and their spouses on the maternity leave provision existing at that time.

Three days paternity leave is currently granted to fathers but Tan (1991) found that paternity leave was considered irrelevant by some respondents on the grounds of possible abuse and also 'not affecting the male employees directly'. She proposed that there was a need for sensitisation of this issue in recognition of the importance of the father's presence at the critical period as well as the need for bonding between father and child and uniting the family as a unit (p.58). This finding of Tan's did not seem consistent with the bilaterality explained earlier.

Contrary to Hill and Ragland's (1995) claims based on findings of others (Stoke, 1984; Sadler et al, 1991) that discrimination against women exists in every culture to 'varying degrees of intent, severity, cruelty and damage', Janat's (1993) study showed that the majority of women and men report that they have not experienced gender discrimination. This is attributed to organisational practices and she found it encouraging to find that both women and men at every level were quite satisfied with their treatment and perceived themselves to be successful in their careers. Hall's study (1996) showed that women heads did not see organisational and work cultures as insurmountable barriers to promotion (p.60). This study sought the opinions of women managers in Sarawak on discrimination to promotion compared to their male

counterparts. It also explores whether their marital status gave cause to any discrimination.

There are many ways in which a woman can be supported if she is to combine roles and advance her career. However, the question of how she successfully combines her professional, personal and cultural roles relates to how she can maintain a balance between these three factors.

## **2.6 Balancing Roles: a Chimera or Reality ?**

Discussions on balancing roles usually involve suggestions on how women managers themselves should work towards harmonising their personal and professional lives. To establish whether it is possible for a woman manager to successfully combine her traditional and professional roles the literature indicates that with support this can be done. Grace (1996) contended that 'the issue is to encourage women to continue working while ensuring that they face minimal society and personal problems. In fact as more women enter the labour force, a more important issue would be to increase the number of women leaders and professionals in managerial and executive roles'. Janat's (1993) findings showed that the policy of affirmative action for women has the support of both women and men. There is also strong support for issues like childcare, pay equity, job sharing and flexible working hours which would assist women's careers. Tan (1991), on the other hand, found that male and female heads considered that it was not necessary to positively discriminate in favour of women but that they should compete on a level playing field with men. In her view, with the increase in the number of women officers, they are likely, in time, to achieve higher management positions (pp. 59-60). The quoted studies have shown that there is a movement towards more representation of women in high level jobs.

Noor Laily's (1984) study depicted in Table 2.3 shows that women's carers have little effect on what happens at home.

**Table 2.3 Effect of Women's Work on Home Activity \*\***

	Better		Worse		Same	
	Wife (%)	Husband (%)	Wife (%)	Husband (%)	Wife (%)	Husband (%)
Type of food prepared	13	11	13	12	74	77
Manner of Preparing Food	4	0.8	14	13	81	86
Feeding patterns	2	0.8	15	17	82	82
Education of Children	2	6	11	11	86	82
Health of Children	3	0.4	12	12	84	88
Interaction between Parent and child	1	1	13	13	86	85
General Upbringing of Child	3	4	12	12	85	84
Religious Upbringing	2	0.9	3	3	95	96

(Source: Noor Laily, 1984)

\*\* (Respondents are working women and their husbands)

This study showed that for the majority of the couples who were both working, both partners agreed that their work-roles had not led to significant changes in their activities at home. In both household tasks, such as food preparation, and matters that concern the immediate family, such as child-raising, the woman's work did not have a significant effect on the home activity.

Janat, (1993) remarked that the Government of Malaysia has made a positive effort to enhance the position of women in society and as a result they have played an increasing role within the labour force. The number, however, of women in senior positions is relatively small but government policies are addressing this situation. For these policies to have the desired effect it is necessary that programmes take into account the different needs of women, at all levels, in the public sector. During the last twenty years there have been changes in policy in Malaysia which have contributed to the increased involvement of women in the development of the country. The Seventh Malaysia Plan aims to develop existing trends to enhance the involvement and position of women in society and in the economic life of the country. Part of the Plan is to equip women with skills relating to the development of the family as well as helping them to manage a career in a way that is consistent with Malaysian values, religious beliefs and cultural norms.

In 1989 The National Policy For Women (NPW) was formulated. (A copy of the NPW is produced in Appendix 2). Nagaraj (1995) felt that, while the involvement of women in the nation's development had increased since independence, there were still obstacles to

their full participation in the country's economic growth. Such obstacles related to the difficulties experienced in combining domestic and professional roles when there are limited childcare facilities. In addition, she considered that women are confined to certain areas of growth because they have limited skills and have to overcome social barriers and prejudices.

Women have made significant progress in educational management as illustrated by the literature both of the U.K. and U.S. as well as Malaysia. Although earlier studies have shown that women, in the past, considered their careers to be less important than men's, this trend is now changing as more women plan their careers and seek opportunities for advancement. They do not seek power over others but rather to be empowered, that is, 'power for' a purpose. They want to be the decision makers but wish to share their power with colleagues. Successful women have confidence and a belief in their own abilities. Role models, sponsors, mentors and networking were identified as positive factors which assist women in their careers. Conflicts do arise when women try to meet the demands of both their personal and professional lives. The work-home conflict is attributed by some researchers to role overload, role strain and multiplicity of roles. These are described by some in terms of time, mental energy and physical strain. Some women managers have developed coping strategies such as hiring domestic help or sharing household responsibilities with other family members. Changes in family structures in Malaysia, such as, decreasing family size, the growing absence of the extended family system means some adjustments have to be made in the family. The presence of good childcare facilities was identified as an essential requirement for women managers with young children. Other provisions such as flexitime, career breaks, extended maternity and paternity leave are possible areas to be reassessed in promoting more women to management positions.

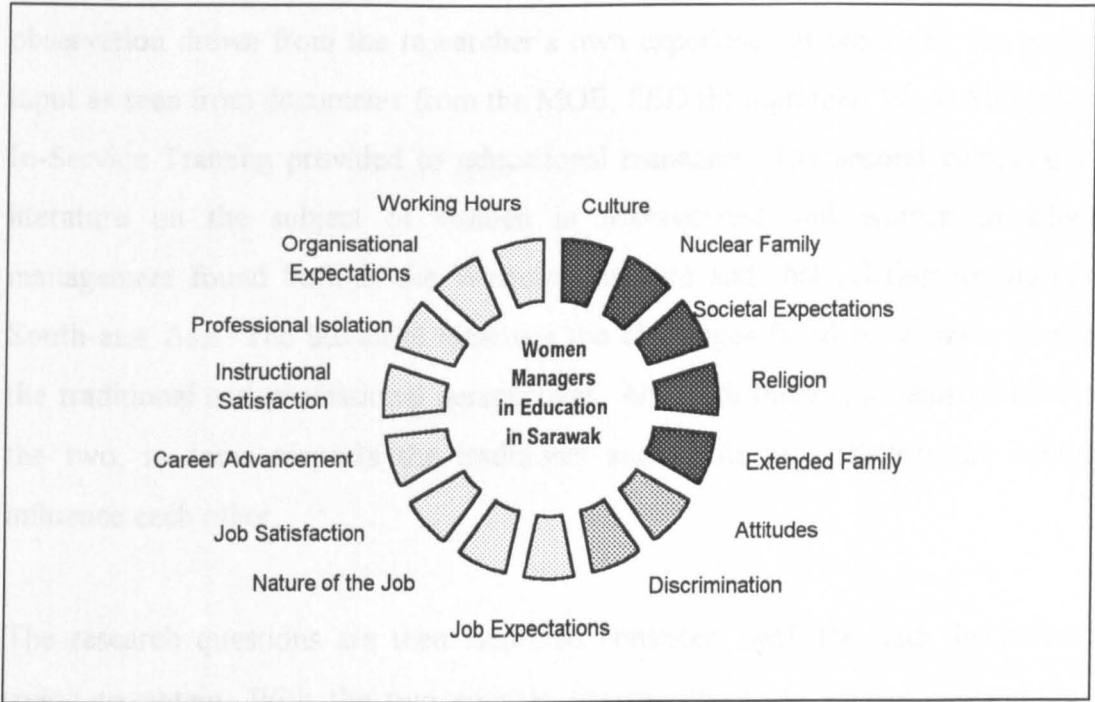
## **2.7 All the factors told**

Chart 2.1 is a summary of the various challenges faced by women managers in combining their traditional and professional roles which have been extrapolated from the



literature reviewed. The chart shows the different factors, which can be categorised as ‘traditional’ and ‘professional’, which influence women assuming managerial positions. The traditional factors include culture and religion, perceptions of society, the nuclear family and the extended family. Professional factors are working hours, organisational expectations, satisfaction as classroom instructor, professional isolation, job satisfaction, career advancement and the nature of the job. Factors such as discrimination and attitudes can relate to both the traditional and professional spheres.

**Chart 2.1 Challenges to Women Managers in Education in Sarawak**



Based on these factors which are relevant to women managers in education in Sarawak, coupled with the researcher’s knowledge of the current situation in the country, a conceptual framework leading to the research design was formulated.

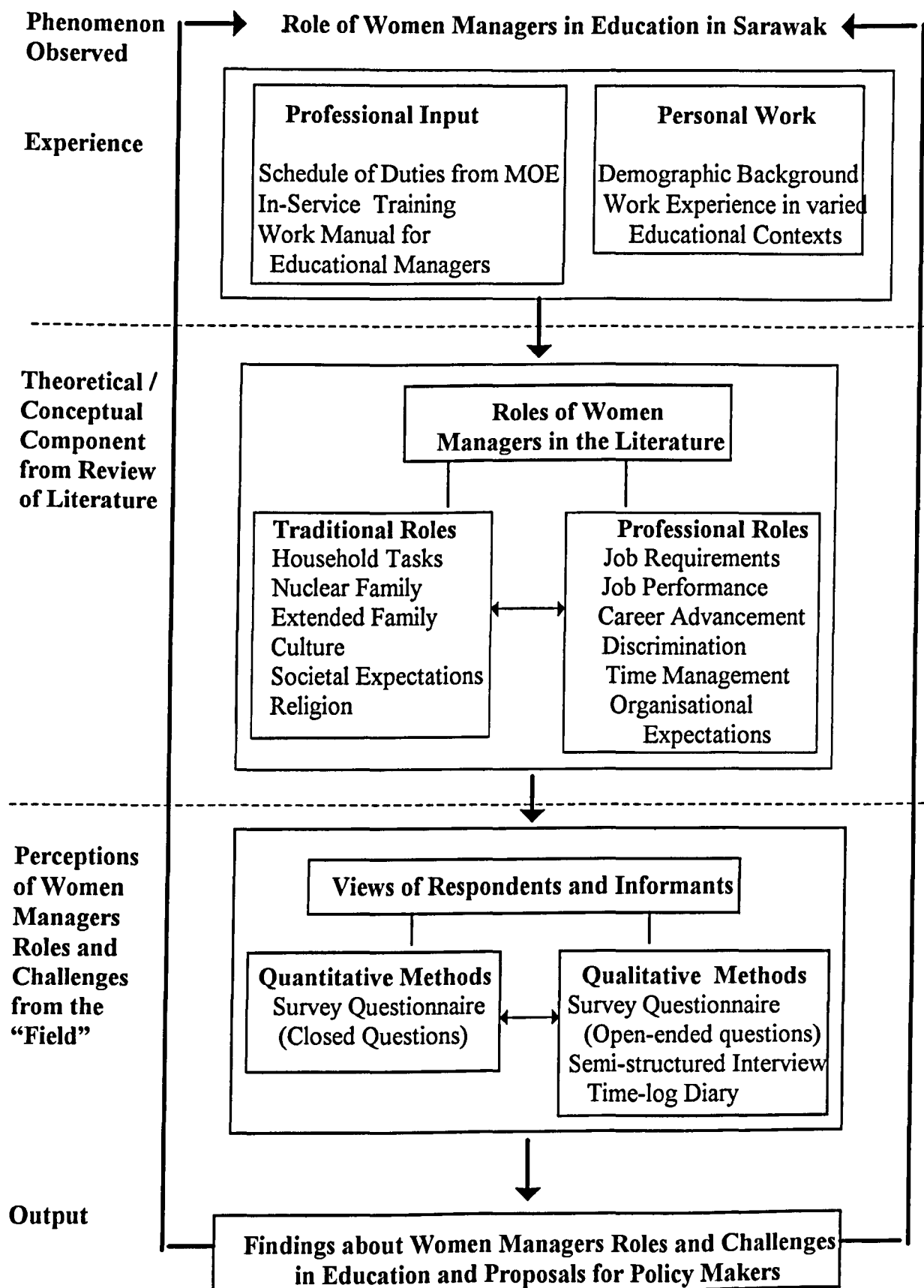
## 2.8 Conceptual Framework of the Study

Figure 2.1 illustrates the conceptual framework adopted for the study. In the research women managers are observed and the conflicts they experience in combining their traditional and professional roles are noted. Government policy means that there will be greater opportunities for women to assume leadership positions in the education sector

within the Education Department of Sarawak and this will increase the number of women in senior positions. Some women managers adapt to their managerial roles very well but there are those who find it difficult to assume and come to terms with their new positions. This may be related to their change of status from classroom teachers and to their becoming leaders instead of followers. At the same time they retain their role as wife and mother in the home. The problem identified by the researcher is the conflict experienced by the woman manager in combining her traditional and professional roles.

The conceptual component for the study is drawn from two sources. One component is observation drawn from the researcher's own experience at work and the professional input as seen from documents from the MOE, SED through their Work Manual, and the In-Service Training provided to educational managers. The second component is the literature on the subject of women in management and women in educational management found both in the Western literature and that relating to Malaysia and South-east Asia. The literature identifies the challenges faced by women viewed from the traditional and professional perspectives. Although there is a demarcation between the two, in some respects the traditional and professional factors do interact and influence each other.

The research questions are then identified consistent with the data the researcher is trying to obtain. With the two sources forming the basis of the research, the best possible methods were selected to capture the perceptions of the topic to be studied. The researcher concluded that to elicit data from respondents in the study, the best means to achieve this was to combine the quantitative and qualitative methods using a survey questionnaire, semi-structured interview and time-log diary. The output of the research will be fed back to the policy makers so that it can assist women educational managers in the State in performing their roles as leaders in their institutions as well as their roles as wives and mothers.



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework for A Study of the Traditional and Professional Challenges of Women Managers In Education In Sarawak**

## Conclusion

This review has highlighted the significance of culture within the different ethnic groups in Sarawak as well as the factors contributing to conflicts when women educational managers try to combine their traditional and professional roles. The literature revealed that generally, women managers perform multiple roles when combining their dual roles - the traditional role as a wife and mother, and the professional role as a worker. It showed that role conflict is a universal phenomenon for women as well as men educational managers. Such conflict is particularly relevant to women, although men also perform dual roles. However, men's roles are more likely to be compartmentalised and therefore less likely to create conflict. The literature revealed that the extent of the conflict for women managers is influenced by such factors as support structures both from the family and at work. In the context of Sarawak, an important consideration is how each of the three cultures view working women. All three recognise that men and women have their own roles within the family and society and do not see one group usurping the roles of the other. In indigenous cultures, it is a common feature for women to work outside the home as well as in the home and thus have economic importance; they complement their spouses both within and outside the home. The non-indigenous culture studied traditionally confines women to work within the home and for their husbands, within a hierarchical structure, though this trend is changing fast. There are those who consider family and work as potentially mutually enhancing especially when appropriate mechanisms for support are in place such as delegation of duties both at work and at home. The family does not hold the woman back from her professional advancement.

The literature from Malaysia also shows that 'adat' and religion do not inhibit women aspiring for promotion though some authors pointed to cultural attitudes and beliefs as the main reason for so few women in high positions. The government of Malaysia is trying to redress this disparity between men and women in managerial posts with provisions to develop structures which would facilitate women moving to higher positions. To reduce gender discrimination in organisations, the NPW have recognised the need for a policy of affirmative action for women.

What the literature from Malaysia did not reveal is the role of culture and religion amongst the various ethnic groups when specifically discussing women in educational management in Malaysia. This study explores how beliefs and attitudes impact on women managers in specific areas of work. It looks at how their beliefs and attitudes influence how they perceive the demands of their work and carry it out. The main questions arising from the literature relevant to the aims of the study are:

- What are the perceptions of women educational managers of their traditional and professional roles and the relationship between them?
- What are the challenges they encounter when combining these dual roles?
- What are the strategies which would encourage more women into management positions?

These questions informed the methodological approach used for the study which will be discussed in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter deliberates on the research design and the data collection methods used to address the research aims and answer the study's research questions. It argues the need for both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. It describes the research processes undertaken, discusses the methods of data analysis and the limitations of each and reports on the personal and career profiles of the respondents and interviewees. The chapter is presented in four sections: firstly, it discusses the rationale for the choice of the research design; secondly it reviews the data collection methods - the formulation and administration of the survey questionnaires, the interview schedules and the time log. Then it reports on the methods of analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data; discusses the limitations of the study and lastly it describes the researcher's role.

#### **3.1 Rationale and Justification for Research Design**

The primary research aim was to explore women managers' perceptions of their traditional and professional roles and how far the former, arising out of cultural and social expectations of the roles of women, potentially challenge the latter thereby constituting a barrier to attaining success in their careers. To achieve this, both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies were employed for a study which is

exploratory, descriptive and analytical in nature. It is exploratory and fits Cresswell's (1994) description of exploratory study as one where 'not much has been written about the topic or population being studied, and the researcher seeks to listen to informants and to build a picture based on their ideas' (p.21). Its purpose was to generate further interest in the subject and to encourage more research on similar or related issues. It both describes and analyses the current situation of women managers in education in Sarawak. The aims and nature of the research questions have influenced the methods of collecting data.

The research has three strands. First, a questionnaire is used as the main tool for gathering descriptive information on the perceptions of traditional and professional roles of women managers in education across the different categories of people. Babbie (1989) noted that survey research is especially appropriate for making a descriptive study of a large population (p.257). The population is comparatively small in this study, for logistical reasons. The distance between place, and their inaccessibility in terms of time taken and cost to move from place to place, makes a survey questionnaire, which has the advantage of economy and speed, an appropriate tool for the purpose of the study. Besides, surveys are flexible as many questions may be asked on a given topic giving one considerable flexibility in the analysis. Both closed questions (respondents select from a list of answers provided to them), and open-ended (they supply their own answers) are used. The open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire were intended to elicit more information than the closed-questions would provide. Besides descriptive data, survey data may be used for exploratory purposes, consistent with the needs of the study. It is the first study of its kind in the State and hopefully it will generate further interest in the subject and warrant more research on similar or related issues.

Secondly, semi-structured interviews with selected women managers were employed to follow through their interpretations of their behaviours and the factors influencing them in order to illuminate, deepen and extend the survey's findings. The purpose of the interviews was to gain deeper insights into the views and perceptions of women managers in the education sector concerning the traditional and professional challenges that they face in performing their dual roles. The researcher's strong rapport with the women managers interviewed (all colleagues) enabled her to explore some issues at

great length. These included such matters as support from fellow heads, superiors, parents and husbands which are pertinent to the challenges faced by women managers. This information supplemented the qualitative and quantitative data collected from the survey questionnaires. Interviews with husbands triangulated findings from the wives' responses and yielded additional information. In addition, interviews were conducted with two women professors, one of whom is an educationist. She is very much involved with women's issues and Women's Associations in the country for which she has been given due recognition. The other is an anthropologist as well as the first convenor of the Women and Human Resource unit in Universiti Sains Malaysia. Each is an authority in her own field and provided additional views as part of the material for the research. An interview was also conducted with a prominent woman leader from Sarawak. As an ex-educationist, wife of a Deputy Chief Minister, a political figure herself and very active in social work in the State, her views and experiences gave the Sarawak perspective.

The time-log diary served further to substantiate data collected, especially pertaining to use of time. The women managers interviewed were asked to keep a time-log diary for a week to record and document time spent on their various personal, family, professional and social activities. Thus, a mixed approach of qualitative and quantitative methodologies was adopted for this study, on the basis that each is appropriate for different areas of information (Bryman, 1995: 108-9).

Although triangulation, in the classic sense of seeking convergence of results, was an important factor in the decision to combine qualitative and quantitative methods, other authors have suggested additional reasons (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Mattison, 1988; Swanson, 1992; cited in Creswell, 1994). Jicks (1979 cited in Creswell) for example, states:

"Triangulation therefore exploits the assets and neutralises the liabilities of different methods".

Thus, by employing both methods of data collection, each with their own strengths, they complement and supplement each other. They are complementary in that overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon may emerge. The quantitative approach, the survey method, additionally offers an alternative to reach out to the whole population. It



enables the situation of all women managers in education in the State to be assessed through statistical or other quantifiable means of measurement or comparison, so that the findings emerge as hard data.

Davies (1995) and Creswell (1994) describe qualitative approaches as 'interpretative' methodologies which seek to understand and predict behaviour. These take account of the 'variability of behaviour according to the context and the subjective interpretations of the actors in that context' (Davies, 1995:3). There are theoretical and practical limitations in this approach which will be discussed later. However, Davies, (1995: 12) assures us that 'qualitative research is an excellent site for seeing whether a theory holds true in a range of different, real-life contexts'. This methodology makes room for relevant and important findings to surface instead of the imposed pre-determined questions of a questionnaire survey. The actual experience of data collection validated the choice of combining methods as the interviews yielded data which could not be captured through the questionnaire.

The quantitative approach provided the 'breadth' and the qualitative the 'depth' to collecting the information required by the study. Qualitative data is useful when one needs to supplement, validate, illuminate, or reinterpret quantitative data gathered from the same setting (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10). This is what the study has done. Bryman (1995) explained that the distinction between quantitative and qualitative research is a technical matter whereby the choice of research relates to its suitability in answering particular research questions (pp.108-109). In the study the research questions required the use of both paradigms as the best means of collecting data. Wiersma (1991) suggests that qualitative and quantitative approaches should be regarded as a continuum since each approach may involve some elements of the other. There is richness in triangulation of approaches and the cross-checking of different research methods enhanced the findings. With the 'pick-and-mix' approach to data interpretation and dissemination, qualitative data can be used to illustrate quantitative findings, or quantitative data can be used to underpin qualitative accounts (Davies, 1995:2). The combination is also believed to be more acceptable to the potential audience (the policy makers) since it is generally recognised that different audiences

often require differently organised research reports (Davies, 1995). Some would consider statistical and graphical representation more convincing and comprehensible while others would be more comfortable with a well worded account. This dual form of representation is in keeping with the proposed outcome of a Policy Document that can spell out steps to be taken by the State Education Department to prepare women managers to be educational managers. It also fitted the kind of data wanted, that is, subjective accounts from the women managers, their spouses and the other three authorities on women.

In the final analysis, I felt satisfied that by using both qualitative and quantitative approaches it was possible to achieve the objectives of the research. It was the best way to get the data required on the theme. The findings would furnish the eventual audience, the policy makers, with information that is generalisable to all women educational managers in Sarawak and it has external validity since the total population of women managers are covered in the project. Qualitative methodology allows the researcher greater insights into the subjects' attitudes and inner thoughts which makes the study more comprehensive and complete.

## **3.2 The Population and Profile of Respondents and Informants**

A personal and career profile of both the respondents and informants gives background information which helps to understand the population and the sample in the study. When the questionnaire was formulated culture was not a factor to be analysed although informants were chosen so that all ethnic groups were represented.

### **3.2.1 The Respondents**

When embarking on the proposal, 80 women managers, all of them in schools, plus another ten (from any part of the education sector) who have rejected promotion were identified as possible respondents (Table 3.1). Most of them were known to the researcher.

**Table 3.1 Women in Senior Posts in Schools in Sarawak (as of June 1996)**

Principal	Deputy (Administration)	Deputy (Students' Affairs)	Afternoon Supervisor	Senior Subject Teachers	Total
27	13	10	8	22	80

By the time the fieldwork was to be launched (a lapse of six months), new appointments were made with upgrading of schools, filling of existing vacancies (especially senior subject teachers) and approval of promotional lists from the Ministry, this number grew drastically. Following a discussion with a Senior Officer in the Department and after carefully studying the list of those that would be covered in the project, the researcher decided to include only those with managerial duties who are in promotional posts in schools (the heads and the three deputies) and widen the scope to include two ex-senior education officers, senior officers in the four Teachers' Training Colleges in the State as well as those in the State Education Department, giving a total of 112. After taking into consideration those unable to participate for reasons such as health or study leave, there were 109 possible respondents (including some who have rejected promotion), as shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2 Women in Promotional Posts in the Education Department in Sarawak (January, 1997)**

	Department	Schools	Teachers' College	Others	Total
Heads	1	26	3	-	30
Deputies	6	59	0	-	66
Heads of Department	-	-	6	-	6
Principal Assistant Director	6	-	-	-	6
Ex-Education Officers	-	-	-	2	2
Total	13	85	9	2	109

The whole population of women managers was included in the study. This ensured that women managers from varied backgrounds were given the opportunity to express their views within the context of the research. Table 3.3 shows the personal and career profiles of the respondents and gives an overall picture of the composition of women educational managers in the State. The spread fits the different characteristics of the population and reflects the composition of the personal and career profiles of women managers in education in Sarawak.

**Table 3.3 Personal and Career Profiles of Respondents<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Personal Profile</b>		<b>Career Profile</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Area of Responsibility<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>n = 98</b>
Below 40	47	Head	26
Above 40	53	Deputy	63
		Senior Teacher	9
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Size of School</b>	<b>n = 78</b>
Married	76	800 or less	16
Single	24	More than 800	62
<b>Race</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Grade of School</b>	<b>n = 78</b>
Malay/Melanau	45	Grade A	60
Chinese	40	Grade B	18
Dayak	15		
<b>Religion</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Number of Sessions</b>	<b>n = 78</b>
Islam	47	Single	25
Christian	50	Double	53
Buddhism	3		
<b>Husband's Occupation</b>	<b>n = 64</b>	<b>Type of School</b>	<b>n = 78</b>
In Education Sector	28	Single-sex girls	8
Other Government Sector	17	Single-sex boys	5
Self -Employed	19	Mixed	65
<b>Number of Children</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Day or Boarding School</b>	<b>n = 78</b>
None	25	Day	42
1 or more	75	Boarding	36
<b>Number of Pre-schoolers</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Work Experience</b>	<b>n = 100</b>
None	72	10 years or less	13
1 or more	28	11 to 20 years	63
		More than 20 years	24
<b>Number of School-going</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Experience as Teacher</b>	<b>n = 100</b>
None	40	10 years or less	79
1 or more	60	11 to 20 years	19
		More than 20 years	2
<b>Parents Living in</b>	<b>n = 99</b>	<b>Experience as Subject Head</b>	<b>n = 100</b>
Yes	22	None	52
No	77	1 to 10 years	37
		11 to 20 years	11
<b>Other Family Members Living in</b>	<b>n = 90</b>	<b>Experience as Deputy</b>	<b>n = 100</b>
Yes	21	None	34
No	69	1 to 10 years	65
		11 to 20 years	1
<b>Live-in Helpers</b>	<b>n = 100</b>	<b>Years in Present Position</b>	<b>n = 98</b>
Yes	26	1 to 5 years	84
No	74	6-10 years	13
		More than 10 years	1

<sup>1</sup> This is based on 100 respondents

<sup>2</sup> Two are ex-senior education officers who had served as School and Sector Heads

3.2.2 The Informants

The eight interviewees were chosen to represent a cross-section of women managers in Sarawak, based on their positions, seniority in service, marital status and location. Other factors taken into consideration were their ethnic background and the willingness and availability of the spouses to be interviewed. Table 3.4 shows the personal and career profiles of the eight informants.

Table 3.4 Personal and Career Profiles of Informants

<u>Personal Profile</u>		<u>Career Profile</u>	
<b>Age</b>		<b>Area of Responsibility</b>	
41 to 45 years	7	Head	7
Above 50	1	Deputy	1
<b>Marital Status</b>		<b>Size of School</b>	
Married	7	800 or less	2
Single	1	Above 800	6
<b>Husband's Occupation</b>		<b>Grade of School</b>	
In Education Sector	3	Grade A	6
Other Government Sector	2	Grade B	2
Self-employed	2	<b>Type of school</b>	
<b>Number of children</b>		Mixed	6
None	1	Single-sex girls	1
1 or more	7	Single-sex boys	1
		<b>Day or Boarding school</b>	
		Day	3
		Boarding	5
		<b>Urban/Rural</b>	
		Urban	4
		Rural	4
		<b>Work Experience</b>	
		10 -20 years	5
		More than 20 years	3

3.3 Data Collecting Methods

Each of the three methods of data collection are now described in detail: the survey questionnaire as the main data gathering tool, the semi-structured interview and time-log diary for individual experiences of managing schools in Sarawak.

### 3.3.1 The Survey Questionnaire

The nature of the research questions and the scope and aims of the study point to surveys as an appropriate data collection procedure for this study. Cohen and Manion (1994) contend that:

"Surveys gather data at a point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions, or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared, or determining the relationships between specific events". (p.83)

A copy of the questionnaire is produced in Appendix 3. The survey questionnaire consisted of factual questions to elicit objective information from the respondents regarding their background, environment and work experiences. Questions about subjective experiences, particularly attitudes towards women managers and how they can be prepared for managerial roles in education were also examined. By measuring attitudes, we can account for the respondents' general opinion on certain issues, such as, how they view society and the family structure, and how they look at challenges and opportunities. These were asked as closed questions. A four-point Likert type scale was used in many instances to avoid middle-range answers. In addition, questions on their opinions were asked through open or free-response questions. In these, respondents had the freedom to respond to the statements in their own language and could express their opinions spontaneously. These responses were analysed as qualitative data. This approach aimed to reveal the respondents' perceptions of their roles and what they considered to be barriers, in their traditional setting, to be faced and overcome when performing their professional roles. More closed than open-ended questions were used since they are efficient and reliable and easy to score and code. They provide uniform data since everyone responds in terms of the same options assuming they all interpret the questions in the same way. Relationships between age, marital status, length of service, work experience, types of training and courses undertaken were established. In addition the respondents' perceptions of professional roles, their acceptance or rejection of promotion and problems faced when combining professional and traditional roles were examined and relationships between the data items were established.

### ***3.3.1.1 Formulation of the Questionnaire***

The questionnaire was structured according to the data that the researcher wanted to collect. The first part dealt with background information to elicit data on career and personal profiles - detailed information was gathered to be used as independent variables to explain the differences between the various groups. The second part of the questionnaire addressed the respondents' perceptions of traditional roles which included duties covering household responsibilities and expectations of the nuclear and extended family. The third section addressed their perceptions of professional roles which incorporated administrative duties, attitudes towards promotion, management of time and perceptions of conflict. The next section asked for the respondents' suggestions on the integration of the two roles, and finally, open-ended questions were posed to elicit the respondents' views on their aspirations. To avoid categorisation, respondents were not questioned directly on what constitutes traditional and professional roles but the required information was obtained by posing the questions mentioned above. Based on the responses, the questionnaire fitted Czaja's (1996) three fundamental characteristics of a good questionnaire: it is a valid measure of the factors of interest; it convinces respondents to co-operate; and it elicits acceptable, accurate information (p.54).

As it was a self-administered postal questionnaire, detailed instructions were given in the form of a covering letter to all respondents. For managers who serve under a head, the letters were sent through their respective heads. In the introductory section of the questionnaire, the aims of the study and the purpose of the questionnaire were clearly stated and a definition of women educational managers in the context of the study was also given. Instructions on what needed to be done for each question were included. Directions were given to the respondents to send their completed questionnaires to the researcher who was based at the State Education Department throughout the period of the fieldwork.

The survey has internal reliability since it was administered consistently and the information collected was coded and analysed in the same way for all participants. The data collected from the questionnaires was analysed using the Cronbach Alpha test to

test the reliability of the survey instruments. The internal reliability for the perceptions of traditional roles was 0.5986, and those of the items grouped under the three main categories were: (a) household tasks, 0.7500; (b) nuclear family, 0.6378; and (c) extended family, 0.7276. The internal reliability for perceptions of Managerial Skills and Competence was 0.8172 and those of the items grouped under the four main categories were: (a) professional competence awareness, 0.6779; (b) other professional consideration, 0.6689; (c) traditional consideration, 0.5472; and (d) social and economic factors, 0.6875.

The same set of questions was used for all the respondents. Administering a common questionnaire, that is, a standardised instrument, which is consistent across all respondents enables comparisons to be made and an analysis of the distribution patterns of association to be carried out. By having a standard questionnaire, the researcher was able to make comparisons of the perceptions of the various categories of people. The findings from this constitutes important feedback for policy makers particularly regarding the type of training and support structure the various groups would require.

English was used in the questionnaire as all the respondents are reasonably competent in this language. However, the main idea in each question was bracketed in the national language to serve as clarification should the need arise. To present questions in a bilingual format would have resulted in a larger questionnaire which might have been less attractive to the respondents and given the mistaken impression that the task of completing it would be more extensive and daunting than was actually the case. An added advantage of working in English is that responses can be included directly into the study thus avoiding any misinterpretations resulting from translation. This assisted greatly in the analysis and saved time.

### ***3.3.1.2 Administration of the Questionnaire***

To gather statistics of perceptions of the traditional and professional roles of women managers throughout the State, data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire to all one-hundred and nine subjects. Colleagues in the SED helped to



identify respondents. The questionnaires were sent to the respective schools with the assistance of the SED and the identified colleagues also collected the completed questionnaires after three weeks. Assistance from personnel in the Department was also sought to follow up on those who had not returned the questionnaires. A high response rate of 91.7% was ensured through follow up by telephone and sending another set of questionnaires when the need arose (but these were very few). Each questionnaire was numbered so that it was easier to identify them and follow up as appropriate. Despite this lack of anonymity, respondents were open in their responses, helped probably by an assurance that their individual answers would be kept confidential. Their enthusiasm to co-operate was most remarkable in the open-ended questions.

Postal or mail questionnaires (with the advantage of low cost, but greater accessibility) allowed for the whole population to be included. For internal validity, the draft questionnaire was initially discussed with colleagues attending the 'Questionnaire Design' class organised for post graduate students in the Graduate School of Education, Bristol, and amended in the light of their suggestions. The questionnaire was then piloted on ten Malaysian B.Ed. TEFL and Doctoral students and overseas female colleagues on the course in the School of Education. This was to test for clarity of language and meaning, adequacy of information, variation in response and length of time required to complete the questionnaire. It was also piloted by e-mail with a colleague in Sarawak with whom the researcher was keeping in constant contact and who had expressed interest in the topic. The piloting revealed the need for some fine tuning, particularly in content as the respondents were able to reveal areas that needed more information or clarification. A comment such as, the need to specify different stages of conflict, was particularly useful as it helped to strengthen the findings and analysis. Adjustments were also made on the structure and format of the questionnaire.

Permission to carry out the survey was sought from the MOE and the SED. Their letters of approval and call for co-operation, which must first be obtained before any kind of study can be carried out in an institution in Sarawak, served as a further inducement to the respondents and facilitated access to them.

In this study, due to limitations of time and space, the questionnaire could only focus on certain characteristics of the research group, that is, married or single, urban or rural, the managerial positions and length of service. These characteristics, the researcher felt, were important to highlight the differences, if any, in conflicts between the traditional and professional roles among the various groups identified. Since the survey was self-administered, the questions could be subject to personal interpretation and there was no opportunity to correct misunderstandings or offer interpretations to the respondents. Therefore, they could skip questions they did not understand or want to answer. This the researcher rectified when in the course of editing the self-administered responses for completeness, accuracy and uniformity, any missing data was clarified over the phone (this was very little). Where respondents could not be contacted to clarify their responses, they were treated as missing data.

### **3.2.2 The Semi-Structured Interview**

Bogdan and Biklen (1992) suggest two ways in which interviews may be used in data collection: (i) as a dominant strategy, and (ii) to be used with other techniques. Here they were used with other techniques alongside questionnaires. They enabled descriptive data to be gathered in the subjects' own words; they are their perceptions of the issues being researched. The interviews investigated further the informants' views and perceptions of their expected and actual roles as educational managers, the influencing factors affecting their performances in the dual roles and the challenges they face. A semi-structured interview was adopted since it is more flexible and can be suited to the personality and circumstances of the persons being interviewed (Johnson, 1994:45) while at the same time maintaining some 'structure' and 'direction'. This facilitated analysis of the interview as the responses could be coded into categories. Semi-structured interviews also permitted the researcher to probe and expand the informants' responses where and when appropriate (Cohen and Manion, 1995: 227). Hence there were no constraints in the questioning and the informants felt free to volunteer additional information.

A draft of the interview schedule was formulated based on the literature review and the areas to be expanded from the questionnaire. It was piloted on two women managers and the spouse of one (all from Malaysia) on the Ed.D. course who were familiar with the context of the study. The couple were given the interview schedule prior to the interview whereas the other woman interviewee was only briefed on its purpose and the areas that were to be covered. All said they were comfortable with the approach that was adopted. The three interviews were then transcribed to enable the researcher to check that important details were not omitted. Enough ground was covered in the interview for women managers, but additional questions for the spouses were added. These included questions on their perceptions of the traditional and professional roles of women and whether they saw conflicts between the two. In addition, questions on whether the present maternity leave is sufficient, on childcare provision and on their aspirations for their wives' careers were included. (See Appendices 4a and 4b for interview schedules for women managers and their spouses respectively).

At first, six school heads in Sarawak were identified as informants. The criteria used for selection was that they had proven themselves to be good managers (by virtue of their promotion or being offered promotion and being recommended by the Education Department). They must have served as Heads for at least three years, either continuously, or over a period of time so that they could bring their experience to the research. These heads were deliberately chosen because they were experienced and could express themselves clearly and confidently. The sample was to represent a cross-section of rural and urban schools, boarding and day schools, and included single and married women heads. The choice of six heads was partly due to time constraints but the sample had a good spread across the State representing 22% of women heads at the initial count (total number was 27 heads). Working with six permitted the researcher to spend more time with each allowing all areas to be covered in depth.

Upon entering the site and after an initial analysis of the questionnaire (calculating frequency of responses), it was decided to interview eight selected from ten heads who had agreed to be interviewed. The researcher decided to widen the focus to include all levels of women managers. Of the eight managers selected, seven were married. Seven

were heads and one was a deputy head. The spread of the characteristics of the respondents is illustrated in Table 3.4. It was established that there was sufficient time to deal with a larger sample and the researcher aimed to get a more varied response. Prior to sending a letter to invite the chosen eight to participate, they were contacted by phone to inform them of the researcher's intentions and to get their approval. The letters described their selection for the project and what it would involve. Personal contact was also made to arrange an appropriate time and place for the interview and, at the same time, to explain the procedures involved. Although questions in the interview were in English, since all the informants are competent, they were informed that they were welcome and encouraged to answer in either or both Malay and English. They were interviewed at their place of work in recognition of their status as professional women (to establish the 'professional feel'). The 'familiar stranger' approach worked to both the interviewees' and interviewer's advantage as there were no constraints in disclosing experiences and views. The researcher was accepted as one of them. The relationship established also showed there was a bonding between women since there was a lot of sharing of ideas and feelings. The interviewees were free and open in the interview and the 'special quality of researcher-subject relationship' referred to by Hall (1996:21) was manifest.

All the spouses consented to be interviewed and these took place in their homes, with a different set of interview schedules. This provided triangulation of data and the findings were used to determine the nature of support the husbands felt they gave to their wives' careers. All the spouses were known to the researcher and this helped in getting their co-operation to assist in the project. The setting, being their own homes, was intended to make them feel that they were being interviewed as spouses of the women under study (to get the 'husband' feel) and not as the subjects of the interviews themselves. Despite knowing what the research entailed (including having their responses compared to their wives' responses), they were open in their responses. The Eastern cultural ethics would normally mean that they would shy away from revealing information relating to their personal lives, but having attained their professional status and their knowledge of the value of research, plus knowing the researcher personally, this made them co-operative participants and some even volunteered additional information.

Prior to the meeting, the interview schedules were sent to all interviewees so that they could reflect on their responses. It was also pointed out to them that these were merely guidelines and the nature of semi-structured interviews allowed flexibility. There were questions which explored the man-wife relationship in terms of help and support and some informants did reveal something of their private lives during the course of the interview. However, since they were interviewed separately, couples were given the opportunity to contradict each other. All participants were aware that interviews were being recorded on tape but nobody raised any objections. In addition, notes were taken during the course of the interview. The interviews with the women lasted two to two-and-a-half hours while those with their spouses were of one to one-and-a-half hours' duration. The same questions were posed to all the women but there were also additional questions which emerged from the dialogue; a similar pattern was adopted for the spouses. The interviews allowed different interpretations to emerge. Both the women and their spouses were happy to take part as they knew they had something to contribute to an understanding of women in educational management. A code of ethics in respect of their privacy was maintained. They were assured that, in the write-up, they would not be quoted by name or pseudonyms. Instead they are identified by codes. *WM1, WM2, WM3, WM4, WM5, WM6, WM7 and WM8* are the women managers. *SS1, SS2, SS3, SS4, SS5, SS6, and SS7* are the corresponding seven spouses of the managers who are married.

The two lady professors interviewed were chosen primarily for their reputation and their contributions in the area under study. The researcher had e-mailed Professor Wazir Jahan Karim after reading of her current work and publications from her University's newsletter. Her work on women's studies was of great interest and relevant to the study. Professor Fatimah Hamid Don was the Dean of the School of Education at University Malaya when the researcher did her Diploma in Education. She has been variously involved in Women's organisations in the country and is currently serving as Honorary Secretary of the National Women's Institute. The interview with Puan Sri Empiang, an ex-educationist and political figure from Sarawak, further enriched the findings from the Sarawak perspective.

### **3.3.3 The Time Log Diary**

The eight managers selected for semi-structured interviews were asked to keep a time-log diary for a week which could be developed into an open-ended journal. The formulation of the time-log diary was based on Rapoport and Rapoport (1977) whereby informants were asked to log in their activities at their own stated times. In addition a column for comments was included. For this they were each given a booklet to record their activities throughout each day for a whole week. This was used to illustrate time spent on various activities categorised as personal, family, professional and social. The purpose of the time-log diary, a cross-sectional method of time triangulation, was to collect data concerned with time-related processes from different groups at one point in time. It is less expensive than cohort analysis and findings can be processed more quickly. However, the time-log diary would not identify typical patterns of development since it was not longitudinal (the time span was one week). Therefore, this method was used alongside the semi-structured interview, making the two methods complementary. Although these two approaches were more time consuming for the informants in terms of time spent for the interviews and filling in time log diaries (one informant did mention this, but she ended up producing a neatly-typed copy), the co-operation of informants was secured since they knew they would only have to participate once and they were committed to the project. Besides, those identified had proven themselves to be successful managers so they could be relied on to give their co-operation as the returns have shown. The detailed entries and comments gave another dimension to the research findings.

## **3.4 Data Analysis**

Analysis of quantitative data and qualitative data will be discussed separately.

### **3.4.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

Because of the nature of the survey whereby percentages and frequencies are the measurements applied, non-parametric statistics were used. The initial task upon receiving the completed questionnaires was to edit the self-administered responses. Three central tasks in editing involved checking the completeness (that all questions were answered), accuracy (that all questions were answered appropriately) and uniformity (that the instructions and questions were presented uniformly). These tasks were carried out at the piloting stage as well. Any incomplete data was considered as missing and treated accordingly in the analysis. Subsequently, the task was to refine the data to a form suitable to meet the above mentioned criteria. Pre-coding on the questionnaires facilitated the task of entering the data into the computer using SPSS for Windows and the variables and codes were identified. In the data, the percentages, frequency and distribution of variables were examined to study the pattern of responses. Although no statistical tests were necessary with this population, statistical tests were conducted for future use when inferences can be made for different cohorts. The data collected was analysed by using descriptive analysis and statistical inferential statistics, to obtain a general picture of problems that women managers encounter in combining professional functions with their traditional roles. By this method relationships between background, culture, environment, work experiences and the managers perceived and expected traditional and professional roles were established. In addition factors which act as barriers were identified.

Two-way frequencies or crosstabulations, one form of comparative analysis between groups, were also widely used as it was essential for the study to identify responses from the different categories of respondents. Where applicable, analyses were carried out by the four categories identified earlier, that is, managerial position, seniority in service, marital status and location. Use of crosstabulations enabled the researcher to establish patterns of responses. To corroborate the extent to which demographic background and professional experiences had a bearing on the pattern of responses, statistical tests, such as Kruskal-Wallis, Mann-Whitney, and Wilcoxon Matched Pairs were carried out. All these tests look for differences between groups; Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney look

for differences between independent groups and Wilcoxon on differences within one group of people. The Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova statistical test was carried out for tests involving more than two groups, in this case, position and seniority, whilst for two groups, that is, marital status and location, the Mann-Whitney U-Test was used. The minimum level of significance adopted throughout this dissertation is 0.05. The analysis on the effective management of time was triangulated with the time-log diary.

Since the population consisted of all women heads and all deputies in schools and sections in the Education Department, the findings were generalisable for the entire population of women managers in the State which ensured external validity.

### **3.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis**

Analysis involved working with data, organising and breaking it down into manageable units, synthesising, searching for patterns, discovering what was important and what was to be learned, and deciding what to tell others (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). The analysis also included the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes and other materials that the researcher had accumulated to increase her own understanding of them and to enable her to present what she had discovered to others.

In this study, some analysis was done during data collection to give the researcher greater focus in the data collection and thereby keep the task manageable (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:154). The bulk of the analysis, however, was done after data collection. Fieldnotes from interview data and the open-ended questions in the survey questionnaire were manually analysed. Since there were different kinds of data, they were numbered in such a way as to keep similar kinds of materials together to facilitate locating data that might be required later. After the data was numerically ordered on paper, it was read at least twice to get an overview of the material. Particular attention was given to the comments and memos made by the researcher in the margins. During the reading a



preliminary list of coding categories was developed. It was decided to code the categories thematically, and chart them in tables, which helped identification purposes as the materials on a given topic could be physically separated from other data. To do the coding, the data was scanned for regularities and patterns as well as for topics already identified. Then words and phrases to represent these topics and patterns were selected. The researcher went through all the data and marked each unit with the appropriate coding category. The material was sorted and sifted to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, distinct differences between subgroups, and common sequences. The next stage involved sorting the data into the various categories using the cut and paste technique. Comparisons between responses, where and when relevant, were made, and illuminating discussion and revealing reflections highlighted.

The data from the time-log diary enabled the researcher to analyse the time spent on each of the three categories of activities per day for seven consecutive days. Logging in began on the day the women managers were interviewed. The intention here was that the days in question would include both their working days and their 'free' days. Appendix 5a and Appendix 5b are samples of a completed one-day time-log diary. Appendix 5c is an example of a one-week time-log diary which illustrates how these time data were categorised, that is, according to:

1. Total time spent on school premises.
2. Time spent on actual school work and school- related work on school premises.
3. Time spent on school- related work off school premises.
4. Time spent on family.
5. Time spent on personal interests.

The analysis of time usage from the diary was triangulated with the questionnaire findings. At the time of their interviews, which also marked the start of their filling in the time-log diaries, four of the affected schools were having their Teachers' Day Celebration, which meant that some days were disrupted in the preparation for the occasion or the actual celebration itself. Thus, the time they spent on school work

(including at home) might not be representative of other weeks as there were disruptions in the routine. This, however, did not limit the value of the time-log as records of their activities were noted and it was still possible to track their use of time into the five categories.

### **3.5 The Researcher's Role - Gaining Access**

The researcher has worked in the education sector throughout her career in various capacities in the Education Department. This made gaining access to colleagues and obtaining materials, information and resources from the Education Department easier. As an insider researcher, she was familiar with the culture as well as the language and symbols used. The fact that some respondents were close friends of the researcher could have been a disadvantage. Knowing her personally did cause some (though very few indeed) to refrain from disclosing some 'intimate' details, whilst on the other hand most were more than willing to co-operate, especially since it was of interest to them as well. As a researcher, she had to be an outsider, an observer and during the research period had to 'distance' herself from their lives. It was difficult sometimes to keep the interviews with the women managers and their spouses formal, thus explaining why some of the interviews took longer than expected. Both the researcher and the researched felt uncomfortable at the start of the formal interview but became relaxed after the initial phase. There were times during the interviews when the researcher experienced difficulties with the multiple roles as colleague-friend-researcher. The difficulty of 'making the familiar strange' arose when questions were asked and the researcher was already aware of the replies the interviewees would make. The warmth shown by the informants themselves dispelled the researcher's worries and reassured her that she could gain their trust and confidence. The teabreaks, lunches and dinners shared after the interviews (often together with the spouses) demonstrated this point.

### **3.6 Limitations of the Study**

The study looks at women managers in secondary schools, teacher training and the Department of Education, and excludes those in higher education and primary schools. The rationale for this approach was outlined in Chapter 1. All the informants in the interviews were from schools despite the fact that the research is on women in educational management in Sarawak. However, the survey questionnaire involved all women managers in the Department, TTC as well as secondary schools, so the experiences and perceptions of all graduate women educational managers in all sectors within the Sarawak Education Department is taken into consideration. All the three approaches used, questionnaire, interview and time-log diary, are self-reporting. It must be emphasised that reporting women managers' perceptions of their behaviours is not necessarily an accurate reflection of reality. Incorporating views of significant others, such as, deputies, teachers and staff, parents and children, in addition to self-reporting, would give additional insight on how others see the roles and the conflicts that women educational managers are facing. It would be useful for future studies examining role conflict to include such views. This study did, however, include the views of spouses who are very important significant others.

In the qualitative method only women managers were interviewed. Men managers who could give their perspectives on their female colleagues were not included. This limits the scope of the research to a one-sided view of educational management given from the women's perspectives. However, three of the spouses interviewed are educationists; two of them are school heads and they gave their perceptions of women educational managers based on their own experiences. This study also did not consider the parental background of women managers, such as, occupation of mothers/fathers. However, parents' attitudes to their daughters' promotion (their support for their daughters' careers) did surface in the interviews. It reflected parental expectations of their daughters' performances. Incorporating studies like that of Ribbins and Marland (1994) which acknowledges the influence of parents and even of grandparents in shaping and determining the educational experiences of each of the seven respondents in his study,

could throw more light on influences of the older generation on the perception of conflicts.

## Summary

In this chapter the researcher has discussed the appropriateness of the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. It was argued that the use of the survey questionnaire, semi-structured interview and time-log diary are three methods of data-gathering which gave breadth and depth to the research. The primary research aim was to explore women managers' perceptions of their traditional and professional roles and by using both quantitative and qualitative methods it was possible to undertake a study which was exploratory, descriptive and analytical. The researcher's background made it possible for her to operate within the cultural norms which the respondents accept. Her knowledge of the respondents, and the fact that they were colleagues, was an advantage since she could rely on their co-operation. As a researcher, however, she felt she had to 'distance' herself during the research period and become an outsider so that she could become a 'neutral observer'. The formulation and administration of the survey questionnaires and interview schedules and the recording of the time-log diary was discussed. The analysis of the findings was explained. Triangulation in methodology was used to achieve the research aims and answer the research questions identified in Chapter 1. The chapter also explains how the population used was identified and the interview sample selected. The sample fitted the characteristics of the population and by including the whole population of women managers in the study it has external validity. The researcher found strategies to address what she perceives to be limitations to the study.

The dualism approach, of qualitative and quantitative methods, continues in the next chapter where the findings and analysis from both methods are combined which is consistent with the theme of complementarity adopted in this study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings from the analysis of the quantitative data gathered through the closed-ended questions in the survey questionnaires. This is integrated with the major findings from the qualitative data compiled through the open-ended questions of the same questionnaires, the semi-structured interviews and the time-log diaries. This reflects the researcher's use of multiple methods of data collection, the justification of which can be found in chapter 3. One strength of the research is this combination of approaches.

The presentation is in the form of

- i. Charts and tables.
- ii. Quotations from Open-ended questions in the questionnaires (*OR*) and from interviews selected to represent respondents' views. The quotes are verbatim.

The findings are presented and analysed according to the research questions:

- a. What are the perceptions of women managers in education of their professional and traditional roles and the relationship between them?
- b. With the new opportunities provided for women in managerial roles in education, what are the challenges they face in combining their professional and traditional roles and how do they respond to them?
- c. What strategies would facilitate the entry of more women into management roles in education in Sarawak?

Those involved in the survey are:-

- (i) 26 Heads (1 Sector Head, 2 Principals of Teacher Training Colleges, 23 Heads of schools);
- (ii) 60 Deputies (6 Deputy Sector Heads, 54 Senior Assistants in schools);
- (iii) 12 Heads of Department (HoD) (6 from Teacher Training Colleges and 6 Principal Assistant Directors in the Education Department).
- (iv) Two senior officers who had served as School and Sector Heads but have left the service are respondents in the survey.

This is the total number of women in senior education positions in Sarawak, ensuring comprehensive coverage. The use of the whole population in the survey is another strength of the research. Although no statistical tests are necessary with this population, statistical tests are conducted for future use when inferences can be made for different cohorts. Where appropriate, in the quantitative data, managers' responses are looked at under four perspectives : (i) by managerial positions, (ii) by seniority in service, (iii) by marital status, and (iv) by location. These categories derive from the assumption that there are differences between responses of the respondents in the different categories. There are 13 who have served less than 10 years, 63 have worked from 10 to 20 years and 24 served more than 20 years; 76 are married, 2 are divorced and 22 are single; 77 work in urban and 23 in rural schools. In order to see the actual differences of the perceptions of the various subgroups, their responses (for example Heads, Deputies and HoDs) are compared by crosstabulations. There was no intention in the questionnaire to identify perceptions by relating them to the religious or racial domains. However, it emerged during the interviews that these factors were an important part of the culture of the informants and that culture itself was a prominent determinant of their perceptions relating to their personal and professional roles.

Informants in the interviews and time-log diaries consist of seven heads and one deputy. One informant is single, the rest married. Ethnically, there are three Malays, two Melanaus, two Chinese and one Iban representing schools in urban and rural areas, as well as Grade A and B schools. Interviews with all the husbands of the married

informants triangulate findings from the wives' responses and provide additional information. Seven spouses were interviewed; five are civil servants and managers in their own field, the other two are self-employed. As explained in Chapter 3, for ethical reasons, these informants are not named. For purposes of anonymity the women managers are identified as *WM1*, *WM2*, *WM3*, *WM4*, *WM5*, *WM6*, *WM7* and *WM8*. The spouses are referred to as *SS1*, *SS2*, *SS3*, *SS4*, *SS5*, *SS6*, *SS7* with the numbers corresponding to that of their wives. The personal and career profiles of these interviewees are presented in Chapter 3.2.2. The interviews conducted with two lady professors, each an authority in her own field, are additional contextual data. Professor Fatimah Hamid Don is an educationist very much involved with women's issues and Women's Associations in the country for which she has received official recognition; Professor Wazir Jahan Karim is an anthropologist as well as the first convenor of the Women and Human Resource Unit in Universiti Sains Malaysia. The interview with an ex-educationist and political figure from Sarawak, Puan Sri Empiang, provided further contextual data.

#### **4.1 Perceptions of Traditional Roles**

How one perceives traditional roles has a bearing on one's attitudes to family, career and related aspects of one's life. This section examines the perceptions of traditional roles by different groups of respondents. The findings are drawn from analysis of qualitative and quantitative data. In the closed questions in the questionnaire, the analysis of the responses is presented under three sub-headings; household tasks, matters that concern the nuclear family and matters that extend beyond the immediate family to the extended family. Although there are no direct questions on perceptions of traditional roles per se, those carrying out the various functions, the women themselves, the spouses, both of them, or a third person (for example, domestic helper, mother, sister), give some indication of the roles existing within the household. Questions about perceptions of traditional roles are asked in the interviews with the women managers, their spouses and the other three women interviewed.

Table 4.1 shows a frequency distribution of the division of work in the household under the three subheadings, household tasks, ‘nuclear’ family and extended family. The table shows decreasing “self involvement” as one moves from Household to Extended Family and increasing “spouse participation” along the same domain.

**Table 4.1 Perceptions of Traditional Roles - Activities of the Household**

Activities of Household	self		husband		self & husband		Other	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>A. Household Tasks</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>44.2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>25.9</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>27.0</b>
cooking meals	47	47.5	0	0	13	13.1	39	39.4
washing/ironing	46	47.4	1	1.0	11	11.3	39	40.2
cleaning	41	42.3	1	1.0	14	14.4	41	42.3
marketing	42	42.9	6	6.1	41	41.8	9	9.2
household budget	39	41	6	6.3	47	49.5	3	3.2
<b>B. ‘Nuclear’ Family</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>28.5</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>51.1</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>9.5</b>
looking after the children	14	19.2	2	2.7	39	53.4	18	24.6
sending the children to school	16	22.9	17	24.0	23	32.8	14	20.0
taking the children to the dentist	26	35.6	7	9.6	39	53.4	1	1.4
taking a sick child to the clinic	22	28.9	11	14.5	42	55.3	1	1.3
matters concerning children’s schooling	27	35.5	3	3.9	45	59.2	1	1.3
<b>C. Extended Family</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4.8</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>66.5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3.9</b>
attending to parents	26	37.7	2	2.9	39	56.5	2	2.9
attending to in-laws	7	11.3	7	11.3	45	72.5	3	4.8
attending to relatives	18	24.0	1	1.3	53	70.6	3	4.0

*f* = frequency

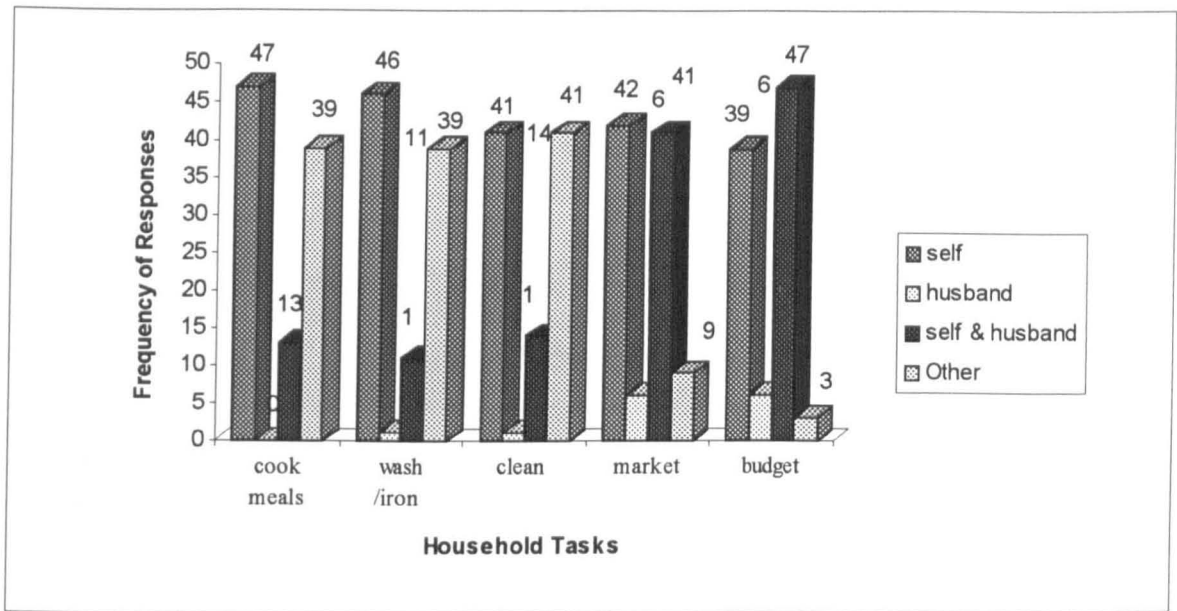
% = percentage

#### 4.1.1 The Household Tasks

Household tasks in the survey refer to activities concerning the running of the home, such as, cooking, washing and marketing. Table 4.1 and Chart 4.1 show that generally in matters that are ‘traditionally’ the woman’s domain, 44.2% of the women reported performing the functions stated unless these are left to a third person, usually a domestic helper (27%). No spouses cook and only a few wash (1%) and clean the house (1%). However, a significantly high percentage of them are now involved in marketing (41.8%) and household budgeting (49.5%). This sharing of duties reflects the current status of working couples’ partnerships while, at the same time, underlining references to such activities which have been traditionally undertaken by spouses. The analysis of



the interviews, which will be dealt with later, substantiates the trends supported by the questionnaire responses.



**Chart 4.1 Perceptions of Traditional Roles - Household Tasks**

In Table 4.2, a Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova test carried out between position and seniority shows there was no significant difference between both groups - heads, deputies, HoDs and length of service, in their reported undertaking of the household tasks. In Table 4.3, a Mann-Whitney U-Test for location gives similar findings. There was, however, a highly significant difference between the reported perceptions of married and single managers on work in the home ( $z = -2.71, p = .0067$ ). Married women might leave these chores to a third person whereas single women reported doing these tasks themselves.

**Table 4.2 Perceptions of Traditional Roles: Household Tasks by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	24	53.71	2.53	2	.2814
	Assistant	59	43.47			
	HoD	9	47.11			
Seniority:	< 10 years	11	40.50	1.01	2	.6048
	10 - 20 years	61	49.18			
	> 20 years	22	46.34			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

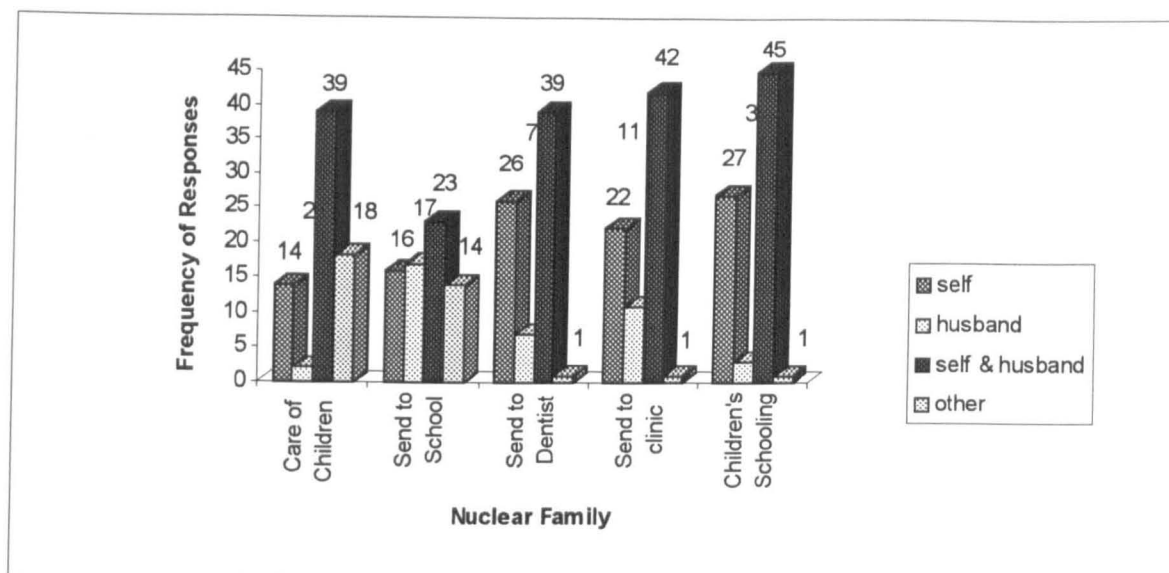
**Table 4.3 Perceptions of Traditional Roles: Household Tasks by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	73	50.33	-2.71	.0067
	Single	19	31.79		
Location :	Urban	52	37.67	-.77	.4406
	Rural	20	33.45		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

#### 4.1.2 The 'Nuclear' Family

In the context of this study, the demands of home extend beyond the immediate family to include the 'extended' family using the Western definition. 'Nuclear' is taken to refer to the immediate family circle, the spouse and children, and the extended family includes family members less closely related. In Table 4.1 and Chart 4.2, a high percentage (28.5%) of women managers reported looking after the children's welfare by themselves, but more, that is, 51.1%, reported that they share these responsibilities with their spouses. A significant 11% of the spouses took on these responsibilities.



**Chart 4.2 Perceptions of Traditional Roles - The Nuclear Family**

In Table 4.4, a Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova test carried out between position and seniority shows a significant difference at  $\chi^2 = 6.37$ ,  $p = .0413$  between position - heads, deputies, HoDs in their reported involvement in the management of the 'Nuclear' family; the more senior their position the more they report managing the children's welfare. There was no significant difference between the reported involvement and length in service. The Mann-Whitney U-tests for marital status and location in Table 4.5, give similar findings.

**Table 4.4 Perceptions of Traditional Roles: The Nuclear Family by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	16	30.81	6.37	2	.0413
	Assistant	42	31.01			
	HoD	7	49.93			
Seniority:	< 10 years	7	30.00	1.43	2	.4890
	10 - 20 years	44	36.05			
	> 20 years	16	30.13			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.5 Perceptions of Traditional Roles: The Nuclear Family by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	62	33.79	-.31	.7549
	Single	5	36.60		
Location :	Urban	35	26.71	-.91	.3642
	Rural	15	22.67		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

From this it can be seen that those in senior positions are more involved with managing the nuclear family while seniority in service, marital status and location do not significantly influence involvement.

### 4.1.3 The Extended Family

As explained earlier the extended family refers to those members of the family other than the husband and children. In Table 4.1 and Chart 4.3, 66.5% of the respondents reported sharing with their husbands the duties of attending to members of the extended family. 24.8% of women reported taking on this responsibility as opposed to 4.8% of spouses. This would indicate that women are more involved with the extended family than their spouses.

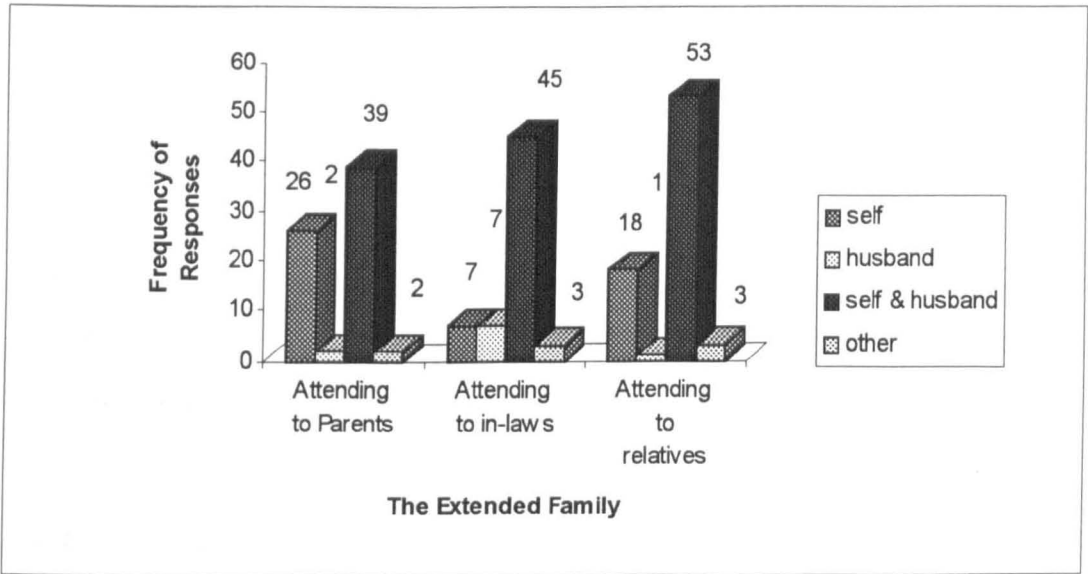


Chart 4.3 Perceptions of Traditional Roles - Extended Family

In Table 4.6, a Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova test carried out to show reported perceptions of managing the extended family between position and seniority shows that there is no significant difference between the reported perceptions of heads, deputies and HoDs. The table shows that there is a significant difference at  $\chi^2 = 6.4$ ,  $p = .0399$  over service. Those longer in service reported giving more attention to their extended

family. In Table 4.7, the Mann-Whitney U - Tests between marital status, location and their perceptions of the extended family show no significant difference.

**Table 4.6    Perceptions of Traditional Roles: The Extended Family  
by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	11	30.55	2.16	2	.3398
	Assistant	36	25.26			
	HoD	6	30.92			
Seniority:	< 10 years	7	20.64	6.44	2	.0399
	10 - 20 years	39	30.27			
	> 20 years	8	20.00			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4. 7    Perceptions of Traditional Roles: The Extended Family  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital	Married	52	27.30	-1.22	.2207
Status :	Single	1	11.50		
Location :	Urban	30	21.70	-.75	.4527
	Rural	14	24.21		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

These tests indicate that age might be a determining factor of involvement with the extended family. Those older, with seniority in service, respondents might have more involvement with aged parents or others in their extended family.

**4.1.4 Informants’ Perceptions of Traditional Roles**

The interviews with the women complement the views of the 100 respondents in the survey that women still dominate household tasks, irrespective of ethnicity. All seven heads interviewed concur in their definition of traditional roles as seeing to ‘homely duties’, doing housekeeping, looking after the children and attending to the needs of the family as their mothers and elders did. *WM6* substantiated her claim, “*I still see that my perception of the traditional role is true, the only thing is the time spent with them (the children)*”. This is explained in comparison with the role that her mother, a full time

housewife, was able to play; ‘ *The father has a clear cut role to look for money and the role of the mother is 100% taking care of the family*’ (WM4). Two of the interviewees described instances of the father giving his pay packet to the wife and only taking sufficient money for his daily use. Any extra purchases meant requesting more money from the wife. In such cases, although the father is the breadwinner, the woman has economic control.

Only one interviewee who is married, claimed that she has never perceived such traditional roles. She attributed it to her own upbringing by a domineering mother, who made all the major decisions including those concerning the children. For example, she was able to continue her study after sixth form when her mother overruled the decision of the rest of the family who wanted her to work. The rest of the interviewees felt that the traditional role existed because of upbringing, religion and culture. In many instances, the spouses provide mainly moral support and the housework is left to the women. WM2 claimed, ‘ *Of course I do more than my husband*’.

The spouses on the other hand, though they acknowledged the existence of such traditional roles, saw them from a slightly different perspective than their wives. Their interpretation of traditional is broader, encompassing such matters as the children’s education, making decisions, financial control as well as doing housework. Respondents in the survey confirmed that spouses did indeed share household tasks. But those who made this claim saw the wife and husband as a team ‘complementing each other; each performing functions for which they are best suited. They quoted evidence of traditional family units such as in villages and longhouses where men and women go to the farm together and help each other by sharing duties. One spouse demonstrated this claim as follows:

*“the husband also have something extra to do which the wife cannot do. Like in the longhouse during the farming season, the ones who cut the bushes and trees are the husbands, and after that the weeding will be the wife, and the planting will be the wife and husband together. Each one will do their part to complement each other. So it doesn’t mean that they share 50:50 in every part of their job”* (SS2).

He went on to substantiate his claim ‘*there is no such thing as a housewife (a wife who stays at home) in a longhouse, there’s co-operation between husband and wife. Housewife*’ (‘suri

*rumah')* only exists in foreign countries, not in our context'.<sup>1</sup> (SS2) This is in response to whether there are any changes in the traditional system in such communities:

*It's only in the things we do. The principle is still the same, women and men should work together, they go to the farm together, they help each other"*(SS2)

and what is currently happening is "a reversal to the old system where both husband and wife work for the sake of the family" (SS2) .

The general picture is that the spouses tended to dismiss the issue of housework as unimportant with the emphasis on the primary function of the woman as an educator, a role model for the children. One said 'my wife and women in her position I think are fortunate in the sense that we have the means to lessen her work at home" (SS3); another stated 'now that the children are older we do not need a servant so we share out the work'(SS7). SS3 also viewed it as natural for women to work, for example, in the sago industry where women form 50% of the labour force. For this informant, women in this particular society are sometimes given more important roles than men in domestic life, although not in leadership. This has shaped his perceptions of women's roles:

*"I don't recall having, (even earlier times), having strong feelings about women staying in their own place because I never thought of what is the place of a woman, although as I said, when we were young, we thought that women have to be mothers, looking after children. That was feelings which we did not have to hold firmly to."* (SS3)

He described himself as one of those who did not believe that a woman's place is in the home. In the village, he saw the emergence of the market economy (tasks formerly done by women have been taken over by machines) which has gradually displaced women in their contribution to the economy. In the towns in Malaysia, in his view, a feature prevalent amongst middle class families is that men feel threatened by competition from capable women. The emphasis is on the economic contribution of the women compared with the men. Another spouse described his father's pride in having a successful daughter-in-law, since, amongst other things, it means better status and more income for the family. The spouses supported the wives' claims that women had economic control in the household.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Malay language the term 'suri rumah' literally translated is queen of the house.

SS1 was aware of the stereotypical definition of the traditional role of women, but insisted that *'you cannot impose traditional moulds on any person'*; that *'it is outdated to insist that women must be doing this and men do that'*. Another spouse agreed that his mother was very traditional, expecting women to do 'wifely' duties and serve the husband. However, like the rest of the spouses interviewed, he was not conventional but did his share of cleaning, washing and sweeping. He did not cook but helped lighten the load of the wife's work by having dinner out three nights a week.

One spouse spoke of what he termed *'the ownership of the mother'*. He was referring to what he perceived as the women's duty to be responsible for children since she has first contact with them. However, he claimed:

*"I've always argued that with the liberation of women, the mother should not be in the house, they should go work hand in hand with the men. Now for instance, for every 10 university students 6 or 7 are girls, and they are intellectually better. But that does not mean they should not look after their home, that they should forget about their primary role in the home" (SS5).*

He subscribes to the conventional notion of traditional roles and acknowledges the multiple roles that working wives have to perform :

*'whatever I gain in terms of salary is not mine. I can only take a portion that is really needed by me..... what this means is that the husband's income is for the maintenance of the house, to be put to the children, the wife and the house. The upkeep of the house is the role of the wife and the husband will go out to earn the income, to the farm, the sea. But now in reality, the wife will have to do all that, management of the house and at the same time will also go out to do extra job, and that is a heavy burden' (SS5).*

On a wider horizon, SS3 made this distinction:

*" I think that kind of background influence me subtly on how I think of women. When we talk to a traditional Chinese, you find that the Chinese are more traditional than any of the native groups in Borneo. I think native groups are more open-minded about the roles of women in society, they do not have a set idea... but you find the Chinese are really patriarchal".*

His sociological background led him to conclude:

*"You cannot dismiss it as a consequence of agriculture-based society.... The whole Bornean culture is quite different from the established patriarchal society in Africa, Mainland Asia". (SS3)*



Professor Fatimah refined the definition of traditional roles put forward by the women with :

*“ My own perception of traditional role of women as the mother, the provider, the homemaker, and I guess the companion to the husband... But then when you look beyond, I see women traditionally as padi planters, rice harvesters, food processors, they have a home space, they have agricultural space, but they don't have a social space in the sense of public space, so very much the Malay saying that 'a woman's place is in the home', and there she can be queen who's good at managing everything including the husband. She can be a queen in her own home, her servants and all that, she may not have to work night and day, she makes decisions. That's the traditional role. When a woman has a career outside the home, some of these things she used to do must go, but many women as I know in the transition, they get up at 5.00 a.m. they cook and leave the food for the children when they come home from school, and they clean the house, wash the clothes ”.*

On the issue of housework, Professor Fatimah explained :

*“ But today women are saying that we are not going to kill ourselves trying to prove that we can do everything. There must be more sharing, but nevertheless, motherhood cannot be shared, fatherhood cannot be shared. .... But cleaning the house, vacuuming the house, windows, taking out the garbage, taking children to school, even bringing in groceries, there's nothing that says those are women's chores, but women have taken on these things in the interests of efficiency and thinking that if I do these things then my husband will like me more, to show him how capable I am to do all these things.....because when husband or mother-in-law seeks a wife for the son, usually she will look for a capable person to take care of her son. That is the traditional perception of a woman, somebody to take care of a man now that he is earning money, or that he is old enough to have a family. But that perception is changing because as women are asserting their own identity and in Malaysia, we have a head start. We don't have to change our name in marriage, you keep yourself as 'binti' so and so...., you don't have to suddenly give up your maiden name and become Mrs. so and so....that really takes away any identity you have..... ”*

Puan Sri Empiang is in complete agreement by recounting her experience thus:

*“The way I was brought up - at quite a young age, I went to boarding school, so I didn't do the housework per se.... but I told the children, the most important thing about being in a house is that it is your house and you are happy there. Housework, you can always have people to do it. I think it's wrong to consider that your role as a woman you are confined to keeping the home, that is not my emphasis. As a woman, as a mother, you must be a role model. The most important thing is our role as an educator, the first teacher for the child..... ”.*

She also elaborated on the traditional roles that grandmothers used to play since in the traditional setting in the longhouse when the father and mother were busy working in the field, the grandmother was the authority for the child's upbringing; she was the role model. Her personal experience reinforced the prominence she gave to the head of the family; *“the father figure, is the authority”* as the head of the family, *“the one who will get*

*the respect of the family". She also reiterated on the importance "to give all that due respect to whoever the educator is", be they the teacher, helper, mother or grandmother. She also demonstrated her point about the significant role that women in Iban society have been playing "..... there are some ceremony which cannot be performed without a woman. The act of doing the actual chanting, singing or performing rites has always been done by women. The importance of social function of women cannot be undermined. It has always been there."*

Professor Wazir confirmed the importance of women's authority over the house :

*"But firstly she must be in control of the house, because the house is not domestic to women, the house is part of her self-identification as a female, as a woman. So if you lose control of that, you lose control of the public. In other words, the domestic is a very important basis to be public. .... So you can't say that the domestic is irrelevant, it's the most important step to be public. So we've got to break all these western definitions of domestic, private, public, because they dichotomise it too much. It should be a kind of free flow of entry".*

More significant is her elaboration of new trends in big cities:

*There's a big trend in Kuala Lumpur, quite fascinating of professional women, very progressive women, retiring early, because they feel that if a woman can retire early, and do the kind of things she wants to do, she's a very successful woman, unlike 10 years ago when women work till they're 55, and then feel frustrated when they're not working, now it's a whole different mood happening here and it's a sign of success. If you can retire early, a female, means you're highly successful economically".*

Such a phenomenon is present in 'traditional' society as well as she explains :

*"And you know like in Kelantan (a State steeped in tradition but where there is dominance of women in the market economy), to be a housewife is to be successful economically, because it's a post there. So a woman who works is a poor woman basically, and a woman who doesn't work is a woman who can afford not to work. She can afford to decorate her home, take care of herself, her body, her kids and all that. It's premium, it's a kind of premium situation to be in. So domestication is not always seen as regressive. If you look at the emic(insider) perspective, which is the perspective from the culture mores".*

The data from the questionnaire and interviews shows clearly that, although there are variations in their definition of traditional roles, all agree on what they entail. The duties of health care, education, role modelling and parenting fall on the mother rather than the father. There is an increasing sense of sharing responsibilities in matters outside the 'wifely' domain amongst working couples though this is explained in terms of the

traditional ethos, that husband and wife work as a team. Women's economic contribution is recognised. Such economic considerations promote the idea of working women while acknowledging the heavy responsibilities of performing dual roles. The presence of a third party in the family reduces the heavy burden of working women. There is also an emerging trend of successful women who need not work because they can afford not to work. The interviews also reveal the informants' different perceptions of traditional roles compared to the western perspective. Professor Wazir sums it up as :

*" I think Asian women are more comfortable with traditional roles, and I think they don't feel the need to prove that they are liberated if they work. "*

Most significantly it was clear from their responses that the women managers in the study did not draw a clear distinction between traditional and professional roles. One of them made this observation :

*" I don't know.....I mean you can't really say 'now I'm a mother, now I'm a head, because even while I am at work here, my children might just call from home. Or while I am with the children, if suddenly I have to do something for work, my children know that I have to do it....." (WM3) .*

#### **4.1.5 Sources of Perceptions of Traditional Roles**

This section attempts to identify the origins of the women managers' perceptions of traditional roles discussed earlier. Data was obtained qualitatively from informants in the semi-structured interview. Two of the women managers attributed their perceptions of traditional roles, to their upbringing and the environment of their childhood. Two claimed that their ethnic backgrounds with their cultural norms helped shape their perceptions. One of them stated:

*"I would call it Chinese culture. I don't know how the Malays expect the daughters-in-law to perform, but where the Chinese are concerned, it is expected .....I was brought up to be obedient, submissive, filial daughter-in-law, wife. Actually as far as my mother was concerned I was a failure as a well brought up Chinese daughter... I was not as well-heeled as my other sisters. I am more rebellious, she attributed this to my education..." (WM1)*

Her rebelliousness led her to reject the role outlined for her by her family. Although she accepted that there are traditional roles in society, she was not prepared to accept her cultural norms and neither did her husband expect her to observe them.

Yet another manager from the same racial background claimed that it was her upbringing that influenced her. She was brought up by a liberal mother who made all the major decisions in the house, which influenced her perceptions. However, she acknowledged the existence of the 'traditional' roles in other families:

*"I don't have this view of women as perceived by the traditional Chinese. My mother-in-law is different..... my sisters-in-law are greatly influenced by my mother-in-law. I have four brothers-in-law, their wives really have to perform their traditional Chinese women role..... they have to really serve the husbands, their husbands never even lift their fingers to help, for instance, in the washing, cleaning. Even though they are working women too, they are still expected to do all the housework" (WM7).*

Another attributed her perceptions to both her experience and culture while another two added the third dimension of religion. Both were referring to Islam:

*"I think it's from religion, culture and my family. Of course the immediate is family, but family has the religious element in it. I think time change, the environment, the situation ....." (WM6)*

One of the managers denied that her perception is culture-driven and instead put it down to being handed down, and thus it varies with changes within society :

*"I think it's more handed-down, I don't think it's culture driven. But that's one way of looking at it, now with all the development, with all the expansion in the career, with more opportunities, where we know that the women workforce is greater than men..... It's more of how society changes, and women now also playing greater roles....."*  
(WM3)

Four of the spouses viewed their perceptions of traditional roles as largely a result of culture. They felt they were like their forefathers and that today you find 'men and women working together, each with their own role to play'. One of them observed that as long as the family structure is still intact in our societies, these roles will continue. He also commented on the course of action that many women have taken:

*"Because of domestic demand, they would choose professions which are more flexible in the sense that they can live the life they are used to, maintain the family they like to maintain and stay at home"(SS3).*

One spouse attributed his perceptions to his culture and upbringing:

*"My parents live in an extended family system, so observation of certain rules are quite expected. In the kampong (village) now parents tend to be more tolerant perhaps because they see things differently now, unlike in the old days we were being observed very closely. It is not your parents and grandparents but adults in the kampong, the respect is there. My experience was that when I was in primary school, the elders in the kampong are the ones who discipline us, not necessarily a relative..."(SS5)*

Two others saw the part played by upbringing and education. One of them put it as follows:

*“ I think it is more to do with your education, not only academic, you know as a person, you broaden your thinking and you tend to see things from a different perspective. There's no very strict rules about who should do what in a partnership. If you're good in something, then do it, if your partner is no good at it, then never mind, either you take it over or just let it be. And the sooner you learn to do that the better, If you keep on insisting that as a wife you must do that and if your wife insists that as a husband you must do that, then you'll have lots of problems” (SS1).*

Professor Fatimah considered that culture and tradition greatly influence our perceptions and practices:

*“Sometimes we don't mind the men having centre stage like at weddings, at funerals, tradition demands that women do the inner sanctum of these proceedings, it's just a cultural thing. So although we say equality, we say it's not exactly the same. We have equal status, but there are some things men do, some things women do but we're the same status anyway”.*

There are influences of religion, such as, wearing of 'tudung'(head scarf), which in her view does not necessarily show that you are orthodox or backward:

*“It is fashion now ..... But in the women's advancement movement in my era when I was growing up, people are campaigning against the need to wear a scarf, so if they managed to leave the 'selendang'(head cover) at home, that's the height of emancipation, that's way back in the 1950s and 1960s. .... But now with this revival, younger people are willingly donning.....of course it may have religious roots”.*

She went on to correct common misconceptions relating to Moslem women and their advancement. She explained:

*“ because Islam properly understood sets the beginning of feminism, women's advancement, recognising that women can be in business like the Prophet's wife, ..... But in Islam, women have a right to own land, property, women have a right to be a witness, but of course under certain cultural conditions,...and very often you have to really draw a line somewhere, because of our cultural inhibitions and all that...”.*

Professor Wazir saw the merging of traditional and professional roles of women taking place. She concurred with the opinions above, surmising that what is currently happening has been more attributed to culture but religion is emerging as a dominant force especially in the context of the 'adat' (culture) tradition:

*“I think it's more culture-driven although now with the urban middle class mass, you can't separate the two, because people in Kuala Lumpur, the Malay women in KL are so Islam- bound now. You see the way they socialise, the way they see things, but they see Islam as a strengthening force rather than a weakening force. So you can't*

*separate the two anymore. But in the traditional mode, in the rural areas, because they're not so clearly defined now as to what is the role in Islam, they're more clearly defined about what is their role in society, in culture, so culture might be stronger there. But even so, the way things are now, I think they're diffusing to a point when you can't really say this is cultural, this is Islamic. I think there's a kind of mix and merge and a mesh of ideas and values".*

As to the Chinese in Malaysia, she observed the changes within their society:

*"The Chinese women because of the economic success generally, because of the opportunities for the education of Chinese women mostly locally (I mean they'll send their sons abroad and their daughters will study in local institutions), whatever it is they're still getting education. I think most of them are really jettisoning the notion of patriarchy, the fact that you take care of your mother-in-law rather than your mother, the fact that you must have sons rather than daughters and all that, is breaking down rapidly, especially in the cities."*

Puan Sri Empiang, who had a very traditional upbringing with her grandmother as her role model, has an outlook which also draws on her Christian faith:

*"I think it is both cultural and religious. Culture does not have its strength unless you have the belief behind it and that is your religion. This is one thing about Dayak community, unless you are extremist. Most of us can accept Christian religion together with our culture.....I will continue to practice some of our culture but I believe in God, and I don't have any conflicts with that belief.....So to me it is both culturally driven as well as religiously, because once you don't have religion attached to certain of your cultural practice, it will die down, it weakens, it will be undermined. Unless you have culture, where is your root?"*

Although in her traditional upbringing there were indeed very few women 'Tuai Rumah' (head of the longhouse), people are now more willing to accept female leadership. One conclusion she drew was that *"Women who become leaders, they usually do well, otherwise they will not be accepted"*, thus reiterating the fact that it has not been culturally unacceptable for women to be in leadership roles in the community as long as they are good leaders. Hence the easier access of women to such fields as the legal, educational and foreign services.

The perceptions of women managers of their traditional role is accounted for differently by different people. To a great extent, it is a function of either their experience, upbringing or cultural norms or a combination of these. In certain cases religion has also exerted an influence. There is an eroding of the influence of culture by religious influences; and the intercultural mix diffuses it further. Exposure to the modern world

has resulted in a free flow of ideas to reduce the traces of indigenous culture all the more. All the interviewees recognised a ‘conventional’ perception of the traditional roles of women but many admitted that they do not observe traditional practices. Their workload and professional commitments make it impossible to be ‘traditional’ wives. Together with their spouses they have mutually agreed on their respective duties in the household, that is, they are individually free to interpret roles.

**4.2 Perceptions of Professional Roles**

This section examines the perceptions of women managers of their professional roles. The findings are drawn from both the qualitative and quantitative data; the closed and open-ended questions in the survey questionnaires and the interviews with women managers and their spouses. There were no direct questions about their perceptions of professional roles in the survey questionnaire. Their perceptions are teased out through their responses to related questions which address the issue of professional roles, that is, their confidence in the various administrative duties and their perceptions of promotion. The findings are categorised under two main headings: managerial skills and competencies and attitudes towards promotion.

**4.2.1 Managerial Skills and Competence**

In the closed and open-ended questions, responses to statements about perceptions of professional roles are presented under four sub-headings: administrative, curriculum, human resources and social.

Table 4.8 shows a crosstabulation of the perceptions of the women managers of their managerial skills and competence by position. Heads demonstrated greater confidence than Deputies and HoDs in administrative matters, except in managing construction work where there is no significant difference in the reported competency by position. Even in managing human resources and social matters more heads reported feeling confident than did their subordinates. However, in the curriculum category, the heads

considered that they do not perform as well as deputies and HoDs in managing relief teachers and examination administration. Heads tend to delegate both these areas to their subordinates.

**Table 4.8 Crosstabulation - Perceptions of Women Managers on their Managerial Skills and Competence by Position**

Managerial Skills and Competence	HEADS				DEPUTIES				HoDS			
	Good		Not Good		Good		Not Good		Good		Not Good	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>A. ADMINISTRATIVE</b>												
managing school finance	17	65.4	9	34.6	10	28.6	25	71.4	1	33.3	2	66.7
managing meetings	25	96.2	1	3.8	35	58.3	25	41.7	8	88.9	1	11.1
managing resources / equipment	21	80.8	5	19.2	29	59.2	20	40.8	4	57.1	3	42.9
managing building maintenance	17	65.4	9	34.6	10	30.3	23	69.7	1	25.0	3	75.0
managing construction works	8	32.0	17	68.0	5	20.8	19	79.2	2	50.0	2	50.0
<b>B. CURRICULUM</b>												
planning the timetable	19	86.4	3	13.6	40	81.6	9	18.4	7	87.5	1	12.5
managing curriculum implementation	24	92.3	2	7.7	45	90.0	5	10.0	5	71.4	2	28.6
managing relief for absent teachers	15	78.9	4	21.1	45	90.0	5	10.0	6	75.0	2	25.0
supervising new teachers /students	26	100.	0	0	46	86.8	7	13.2	6	85.7	1	14.3
managing examination administration	19	90.5	2	9.5	43	93.5	3	6.5	8	100.0	0	0
managing implementation of extracurricular activities	21	95.5	1	4.5	32	74.4	11	25.6	4	50.0	4	50.0
managing the library	14	73.7	5	26.3	12	41.4	17	58.6	3	60.0	2	40.0
<b>C. HUMAN RESOURCES</b>												
managing the staff	25	96.2	1	3.8	42	77.8	12	22.2	5	62.5	3	37.5
managing school-based staff development	22	84.6	4	15.4	27	60.0	18	40.0	4	80.0	1	20.0
organising careers guidance for pupils	17	81.0	4	19.0	36	85.7	6	14.3	4	80.0	1	20.0
managing pupils' personal problems	18	81.8	4	18.2	35	67.3	17	32.7	6	75.0	2	25.0
<b>D. SOCIAL</b>												
managing girls' welfare and discipline	23	92.0	2	8.0	44	91.7	4	8.3	6	75.0	2	25.0
managing boys' welfare and discipline	18	75.0	6	25.0	36	78.3	10	21.7	5	71.4	2	28.6
arrangement for school visits	14	77.8	4	22.2	31	75.6	10	24.4	5	71.4	2	28.6
managing hospitality	23	92.0	2	8.0	44	80.0	11	20.0	6	75.0	2	25.0
organising special events	20	76.9	6	23.1	41	75.9	13	24.1	6	66.7	3	33.3
managing home and school links	20	87.0	3	13.0	43	81.1	10	18.9	3	60.0	2	40.0
conducting assembly	24	96.0	1	4.0	36	70.6	15	29.4	5	83.3	1	16.7

*f* = frequency

% = percentage

Statistical tests were conducted to test the significant difference between the various groups against skills and competence. In Table 4.9, a Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova test carried out for the four categories of skills and competence shows there is a highly significant difference between heads, deputies and HoDs in their reported confidence in



dealing with administrative matters ( $\chi^2=13.24, p = 0.0013$ ). Heads are more confident in administration than their subordinates.

**Table 4.9**
Managerial Skills and Competence: Administration  
by Position and Seniority

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	25	17.38	13.24	2
	Assistant	16	32.19		
	HoD	3	22.33		
Seniority:	< 10 years	3	25.33	4.36	2
	10 - 20 years	29	27.62		
	> 20 years	16	18.69		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.10**
Managerial Skills and Competence: Administration  
by Marital Status and Location

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	38	25.92	-1.40
	Single	10	19.10	.1630
Location :	Urban	26	21.17	-.93
	Rural	13	17.65	.3547

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

In Tables 4.11 and 4.12, Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova and Mann-Whitney tests show there are no significant differences between all the groups in handling curriculum matters. All of them reported being at ease with the curriculum.

**Table 4.11**
Managerial Skills and Competence: Curriculum  
by Position and Seniority

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	17	19.62	1.56	2
	Assistant	23	24.3		
	HoD	4	24.38		
Seniority:	< 10 years	3	32.17	2.15	2
	10 - 20 years	20	23.10		
	> 20 years	12	20.46		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.12 Managerial Skills and Competence: Curriculum by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	36	22.79	-.34	.7343
	Single	8	21.19		
Location :	Urban	27	18.54	-.45	.6539
	Rural	10	20.25		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

A Kruskal-Wallis test in Table 4.13 shows there is a significant difference between seniority and human resource management ( $\chi^2 = 7.07, p = .0292$ ). Those longer in service are more confident in handling people than those less senior. In Table 4.14, a Mann-Whitney test shows there is a significant difference between those serving in urban and rural areas ( $z = -1.96, p = .0500$ ). Those serving in rural areas were more likely to report feeling good at managing human resources.

**Table 4.13 Managerial Skills and Competence: Human Resources by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	19	23.95			
	Assistant	32	30.92	2.92	2	.2318
	HoD	4	23.88			
Seniority:	< 10 years	5	40.30			
	10 - 20 years	34	30.25	7.07	2	.0292
	> 20 years	17	21.53			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.14 Managerial Skills and Competence: Human Resources by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	46	27.51	-.01	.9896
	Single	8	27.44		
Location :	Urban	33	21.58	-1.96	.0500
	Rural	14	29.71		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

Kruskal-Wallis and Mann-Whitney tests in Tables 4.15 and 4.16, show there are no significant differences between the various groups at how adept they are in social matters.

**Table 4.15 Managerial Skills and Competence: Social by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	17	23.35	.43	2	.8047
	Assistant	24	22.17			
	HoD	4	26.50			
Seniority:	< 10 years	3	38.17	4.48	2	.1063
	10 - 20 years	30	23.08			
	> 20 years	13	21.08			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.16 Managerial Skills and Competence: Social by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	36	21.39	-1.28	.2016
	Single	8	27.50		
Location :	Urban	24	16.27	-1.89	.0589
	Rural	12	22.96		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

These tests indicate that those in senior positions are more confident administrators and are more assured when dealing with human resources. There is a significant difference between those serving in urban areas and those serving in rural areas in matters relating to the management of human resources. There was no significant difference between all the groups in handling curriculum or social matters which would indicate that position, seniority, marital status or location do not influence skills in these areas.

A Friedmann Test carried out to determine whether or not there were differences in the level of competencies between the various management skills and competencies shows that there are very significant differences in the level of competencies in the various managerial areas - administration, curriculum, human resource and social ( $\chi^2 = 52.81$ ,  $p = .0000$ ). Detailed analysis between any two components using Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test in Table 4.17 shows that there are significant differences between the administration component and the curriculum component ( $z = -3.05$ ,  $p = .0023$ ), the administration component and human resource skills ( $z = -5.09$ ,  $p = .0000$ ) and the administration component and social skills ( $z = -3.11$ ,  $p = .0018$ ), as is usually expected. There is also a very significant difference between human resource management and

social skills ( $z = -5.51, p = .0000$ ). There is, however, no significant difference between curriculum management and social skills.

**Table 4.17 Level of Managerial Skills and Competence - Comparison between Various Components of Managerial Competencies**

	Variables	Ranks		Cases	Mean Rank	z value	2-Tailed P
1	ADMIN with CURR	- + Ties	CURR LT ADMIN CURR GT ADMIN CURR EQ ADMIN	8 22 6	10.50 17.32	-3.05	.0023
2	ADMIN with HR	- + Ties	HR LT ADMIN HR GT ADMIN HR EQ ADMIN	34 0 2	17.50 .00	-5.09	.0000
3	ADMIN with SOCIAL	- + Ties	SOCIAL LT ADMIN SOCIAL GT ADMIN SOCIAL EQ ADMIN	7 22 3	10.50 16.43	-3.11	.0018
4	CURR with HR	- + Ties	HR LT CURR HR GT CURR HR EQ CURR	43 0 0	22.00 .00	-5.71	.0000
5	CURR with SOCIAL	- + Ties	SOCIAL LT CURR SOCIAL GT CURR SOCIAL EQ CURR	12 13 11	11.17 14.69	-.77	.4432
6	HR with SOCIAL	- + Ties	SOCIAL LT HR SOCIAL GT HR SOCIAL EQ HR	0 40 0	.00 20.50	-5.51	.0000

*Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed- Ranks Test*

Interviews with the women managers and their spouses as well as the professors and the political figure, on their perceptions of professional roles, were conducted to corroborate the quantitative findings. The eight women interviewed share the view of defining professional roles as having a career, being trained, dedicated and committed to one's job and willing to go further to improve oneself professionally. Two heads expanded it further by likening it to what men do. One of them elaborated as follows:

*"Professional women are... those able to mix with other people , able to carry out the duties that are being performed by men, able to do equally well or even better for that matter"(WM8).*

Most of the seven spouses agreed with their wives' definition of a professional woman as one who has a career and earns a salary. One, however, sounded sceptical and stated:

*"Professional women to me are something very office-like, doing the job. I'm very much influenced by what I saw..... normally may be family-centred, but not very responsive to close relatives, very much focused on jobs, circle of friends who are professionals, spend very little time on something not very professional. A professional lady at home will be reading books with lots of helpers, seldom cook, don't have to worry about household job.. it's not so much of role, it's image" (SS4).*

but was quick to defend his wife with "..... my wife stands in between"

Professor Fatimah was of a different opinion regarding this image of professional women:

*"This is the misconception. Most of the men think that because you have a career you don't care about your home. All they have to do is look at the wife, she gets up earlier than most, and she does everything, everything's in order then she goes to work..... that they don't appreciate, they just think that 'oh, she's gone out into the world, and she just doesn't care..... We do care. Because the fact that we work, we would like to raise the standard of living, the quality of life of the family. She also has to think of her own fulfilment, because not all women get fulfilment by just staying at home..... Most women think they need to be more secure, they want a job, that, in addition to all these things, I have something to contribute, ....."*

She describes this as the very essence , *"a woman rediscovering or discovering her own self-concept or her own self-worth, her own individual self that makes a woman want to get a job"*.

In summary, the findings from both the qualitative and quantitative analysis show clearly that generally women managers in education perceive themselves to be good educational managers. Given the trust and opportunity to manage educational institutions, they reported confidence in managing most areas of responsibility. This substantiates their identification of professional roles as being dedicated and committed to one's job. Although some define their professional role as doing what the men do and even performing better than men, that is intended to put the message across to the relevant authorities that women managers do perform exceedingly well given the chance. As is expected, by virtue of their position, experience and seniority in service, more heads reported being more at ease in dealing with most management issues than do their assistants and Heads of Department.

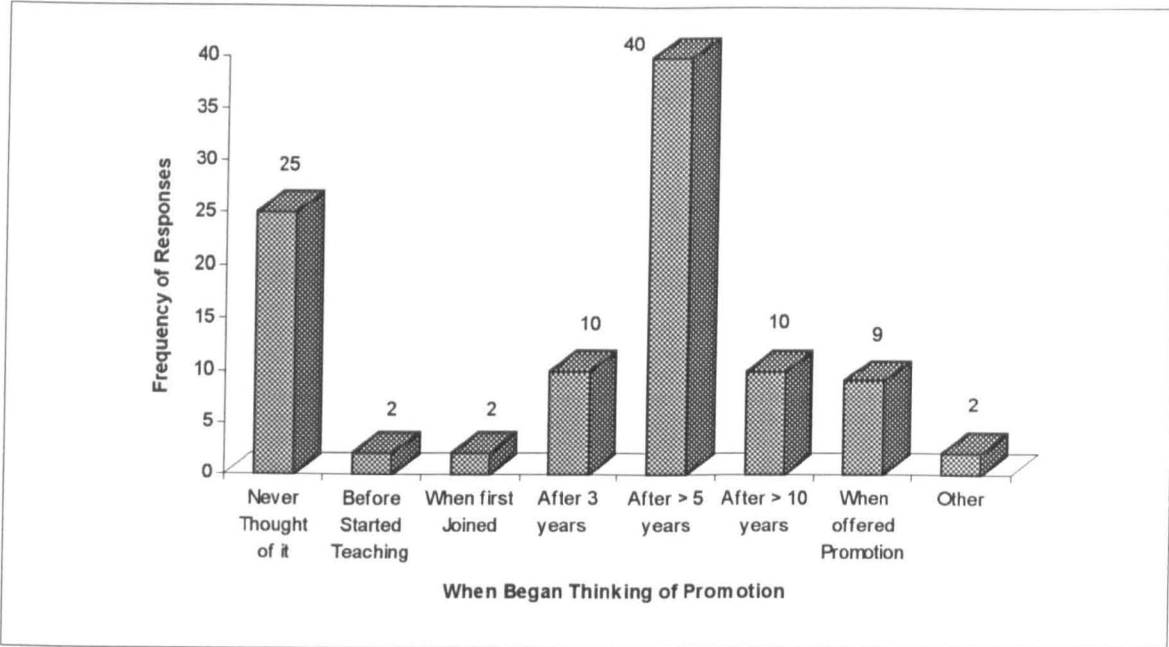
#### **4.2.2 Perceptions of Promotional Opportunities**

How promotion is perceived is indicative of the extent one is willing to advance in one's career. Women managers' attitudes towards promotion are revealed in their responses to the following seven questions in the questionnaire: -

- i. when they began thinking of promotion;
- ii. whether they would accept promotion away from their present station;
- iii. what were their reasons for accepting promotion;
- iv. what were their reasons for rejecting promotion;
- v. (a) whether they felt discriminated against as a woman in terms of promotion;  
(b) whether they felt discriminated as a single/ married woman in terms of promotion;
- vi. who or what motivated them to accept promotion.

##### ***4.2.2.1 When They Began Thinking of Promotion***

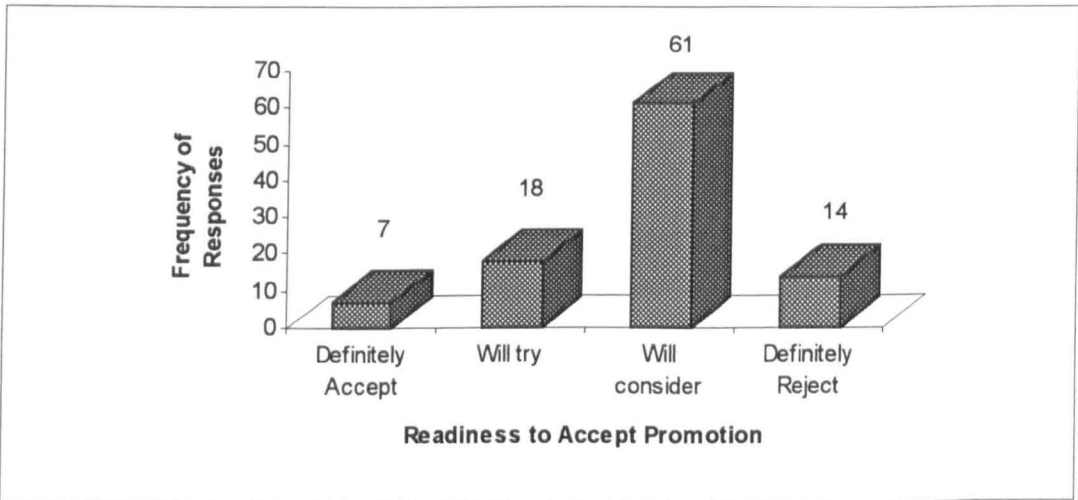
Teachers in Sarawak are eligible for promotion after they have been confirmed in service, have served for more than 5 years and have a good service record. The stage at which women started thinking of promotion varied as shown in Chart 4.4. It is clear from the chart that the majority did not start thinking of promotion until after more than 5 years. Very few (14%) thought about it in the early stages of their careers. With the 'other' categories, there were 25 who never thought of promotion at all; 9 of them only began thinking of it when the promotion came along and 2 of them needed a much longer period before they felt ready to take on extra responsibilities.



**Chart 4.4 When They Began Thinking of Promotion**

**4.2.2.2 Readiness to Accept Promotion Away From Present Station**

Promotion is offered to suitable candidates who fulfil the criteria for the post. As civil servants, qualified candidates are then posted to the school or station. Those offered promotion can accept or decline the offer. In Chart 4.5 only 7% of respondents reported willingness to accept promotion when it was away from their present posting, 18% reported that they would give it a try, but 61% reported they would consider the offer very carefully before deciding. 14% replied in the negative. The chart shows that the difficult point is to accept promotion away from present station.



**Chart 4.5 Women Managers’ Readiness to Accept Promotion Away from Present Station**

A breakdown of the frequency distribution by groups is shown in Table 4.18. There is a similar response pattern amongst the various groups in that whether it is by position, service, marital status or location, the vast majority still reported that they would give it a great deal of consideration before accepting or declining the offer. A few had no hesitation in declining promotion if it meant moving to new stations and even fewer still were willing to accept promotional offers irrespective of the place.

**Table 4.18    Crosstabulation - Accepting Promotion Away From Present Station  
by Position, Service, Marital Status and Location**

Groups & Subgroups	yes		try		consider		Reject	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>POSITION</b>								
Head	2	7.7	5	19.2	16	61.5	3	11.5
Deputy	2	3.2	11	17.5	40	63.5	10	15.9
HoD	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	44.4	1	11.1
<b>SERVICE</b>								
< 10 years	0	0	5	38.5	6	46.2	2	15.4
10 - 20 years	5	7.9	8	12.7	43	68.3	7	11.1
>20 years	2	8.3	5	20.8	12	50.0	5	20.8
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>								
Married	4	5.3	12	15.8	51	67.1	9	11.8
Single	3	13.6	5	22.7	9	40.9	5	22.7
<b>LOCATION</b>								
Urban	2	3.6	7	12.7	36	65.5	10	18.2
Rural	1	4.3	7	30.4	13	56.5	2	8.7

f = frequency                      % = percentage

Eighty-two respondents gave reasons for their decisions in the open-ended questions. Those willing to give it a try, presented reasons such as that given by a middle manager who had served more than 5 years: *“to explore new areas, to assess my own capabilities in certain aspects, to experience a higher level of work experience, to upgrade oneself to be more professional”*(OR) illustrating the readiness to accept challenges. Forty-seven of the fifty who said they would consider the promotion offer, cited family considerations before making decisions, such as that given by one senior manager *“family welfare first and foremost and the success of my 4 children must override mine. I don’t want to be the only successful one in the family, I want all members to achieve success”* (OR). Also the reason offered by a young middle manager; *“I will not accept a promotion if it means I will be*



*posted somewhere far from home or if it entails long working hours, as my children are still young and they need a lot of supervision”(OR)* is typical of many responses. Reasons for declining promotion among those who have been in service for more than 10 years but had declined promotion in the past include; *“I do not like administrative job, I prefer to be in the classroom”(OR)*. The findings above are then compared to the reasons for accepting and rejecting promotion in the following sections.

### 4.2.2.3 Factors Influencing Decision to Accept Promotion

The willingness of women managers to accept promotion may be due to intrinsic or extrinsic factors. These were listed and their negative and positive responses to these factors sought. In Chart 4.6, a very high proportion (83.9%) of women managers reported being prompted to accept promotion by their belief in their own ability. A significant number reported the importance of significant others; 40% reported that their heads and deputies influenced their decisions whilst 47.2% reported it was due to their husbands’ encouragement. Of lesser significance are the roles of parents, children and seeing others on the job. 31.2% reported that increased income contributed to their decision to accept promotion.

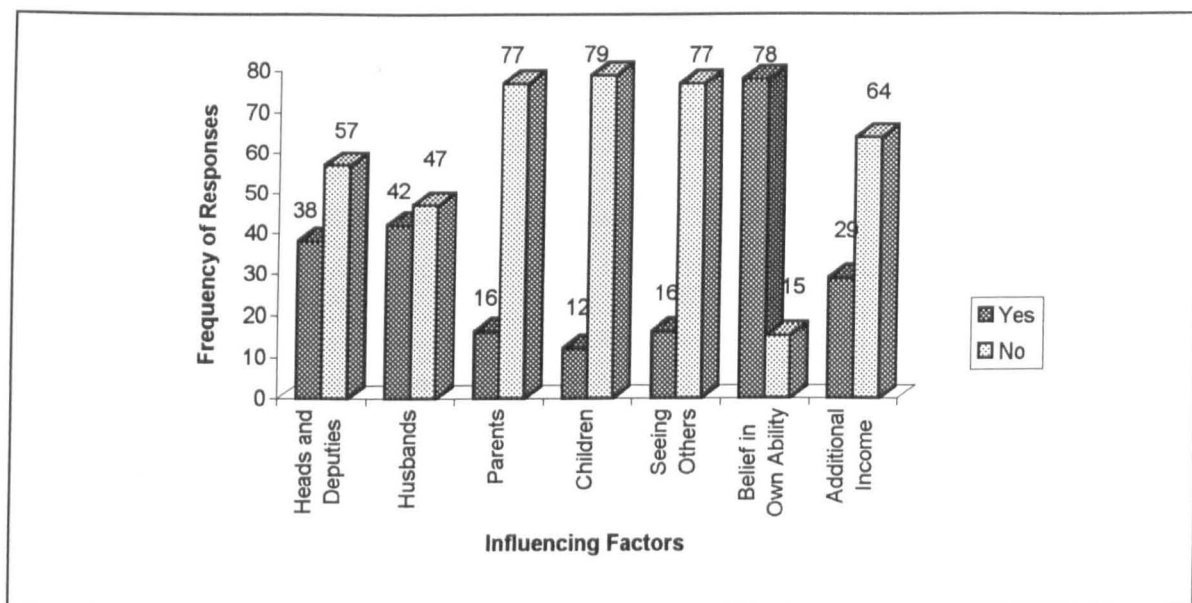


Chart 4.6 Factors Influencing Decision to Accept Promotion

#### 4.2.2.4 Reasons for Accepting Promotion

The reasons why women managers accepted promotion are categorised as professional competence awareness, other professional considerations, traditional consideration and social and economic factors. Table 4.19 shows that the most significant reason is professional competence awareness, the highest being confidence, then professional challenges and experience. Traditional considerations which centred on the nuclear and extended family came second. 47.5% perceived that it is ‘very important’ and another 41% reported it ‘important’ that husbands are supportive of the idea of their spouses being promoted. The spouse factor is second to their feeling confident to do the job, whereby 60% perceive it as ‘very important’ and another 31.8% as ‘important’. They also reported giving significant consideration to their children being supportive of their mother’s promotion and having somebody to mind their children. Only 10.7% reported increased income as a very important motivating factor.

**Table 4.19 A Frequency Distribution of Reasons for Accepting Promotion**

Reasons for Accepting	Not Important		Fairly Important		Important		Very Important	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>A. PROFESSIONAL</b>								
<b>A1. Competence Awareness</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>6.7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39.4</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>47.6</b>
I am very confident I can do a good job	2	2.3	5	5.9	27	31.8	51	60.0
I had enough experience to take on the job	10	11.8	6	7.1	35	41.2	34	40.0
I like the professional challenges offered	5	6.0	5	6.0	38	45.2	36	42.8
<b>A2. Other professional Considerations</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>23.4</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>37.2</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19.3</b>
My superior encouraged me to take it up	13	18.8	21	30.4	23	33.3	12	17.4
My colleagues encouraged me to go for it	21	30.4	17	24.6	22	31.9	9	13.0
I like the post	10	12.5	13	16.3	36	45.0	21	26.2
<b>B. Traditional Considerations</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12.5</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>16.7</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>33.9</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>36.9</b>
My parents encouraged me to take it up	15	30.0	8	16.0	19	38.0	8	16.0
My husband was supportive of the idea	2	3.3	5	8.2	25	41.0	29	47.5
I have the support of my children	4	9.3	5	11.6	15	34.9	19	44.2
I have somebody to manage the housework	7	13.0	14	25.9	14	25.9	19	35.2
I have somebody to look after my children	4	8.2	11	22.4	14	28.6	20	40.8
<b>C. Social and Economic Factors</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>30.5</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>19.5</b>
I like seeing my friends in those positions	35	66.0	5	9.4	9	17.0	4	7.5
It will mean increased income	25	33.3	17	22.7	25	33.3	8	10.7
I like the place where I was sent to	6	7.6	16	20.3	30	37.9	27	34.2

*f* = frequency

% = percentage

Statistical tests were carried out to test significant differences between the various groups in professional, traditional and social and economic considerations. In Tables 4.20, 4.21 and 4.23, Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova tests were carried out between position and seniority by competence awareness, other professional considerations and social and economic factors. The tests show no significant difference between position and seniority and their professional competence awareness; position and seniority and other professional considerations, and position and seniority and social and economic considerations. Table 4.22 shows, there was however, a significant difference between seniority and traditional considerations ( $\chi^2 = 6.34$ ,  $p = .0420$ ). Those who have served more than 20 years reported giving more weight to traditional considerations.

**Table 4.20 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Professional Competence Awareness by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	24	43.04	1.38	2
	Assistant	51	41.25		
	HoD	6	30.75		
Seniority:	< 10 years	9	42.11	2.34	2
	10 - 20 years	51	44.80		
	> 20 years	23	35.74		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.21 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Other Professional Considerations by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	17	31.50	.11	2
	Assistant	42	30.98		
	HoD	2	27.25		
Seniority:	< 10 years	9	38.72	1.52	2
	10 - 20 years	40	31.29		
	> 20 years	14	29.71		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.22 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Traditional Considerations by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	5	14.80	4.20	2
	Assistant	15	10.33		
	HoD	1	2.00		
Seniority:	< 10 years	4	15.63	6.34	2
	10 - 20 years	13	8.35		
	> 20 years	4	15.00		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.23 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Social and Economic Considerations by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	13	18.04	3.24	2	.1979
	Assistant	29	25.33			
	HoD	4	28.00			
Seniority:	< 10 years	5	24.90	2.65	2	.2654
	10 - 20 years	33	26.33			
	> 20 years	10	18.25			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

In Table 4.24, a Mann-Whitney U-Test for marital status by professional competence awareness shows that there was a significant difference ( $z = -2.01$ ,  $p = .0442$ ). Married women might have given priority to other factors, such as, family considerations, besides their own competencies, compared to their single counterparts.

**Table 4.24 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Professional Competence Awareness by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	61	43.95	-2.01	.0442
	Single	20	32.00		
Location :	Urban	44	32.43	-.04	.9647
	Rural	20	32.65		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

In Tables 4.25, 4.26 and 4.27, Mann-Whitney tests carried out between marital status and location by other professional considerations, traditional and social and economic considerations show no significant differences.

**Table 4.25 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Other Professional Considerations by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	46	32.35	-.63	.5257
	Single	16	29.06		
Location :	Urban	34	24.71	-.22	.8266
	Rural	15	25.67		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

**Table 4.26 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Traditional Considerations by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital	Married	21	11.00	-	- *
Status :	Single	0	.00		
Location :	Urban	11	8.73	-.2862	.7747
	Rural	5	8.00		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

\* This test cannot be performed on empty groups

**Table 4.27 Reasons for Accepting Promotion - Social and Economic Considerations by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital	Married	34	25.65	-1.36	.1749
Status :	Single	13	19.69		
Location :	Urban	21	16.02	-.40	.6863
	Rural	11	17.41		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

From the tables above, it can be seen that there was no significant difference between position, marital status and location and professional competence awareness, other professional considerations and social and economic considerations in their reasons for accepting promotion. However, there was a significant difference between seniority in service and traditional considerations. This might mean that older officers give greater importance to matters relating to the management of the home. This is likely because they are of an age when they would have greater domestic responsibilities as their reasons for accepting promotion under the above categories. There was also a significant difference between marital status and professional competence awareness. This might mean that married women do give greater consideration to factors other than their professional competence before deciding to accept promotion. Since statistical tests could not be carried out for marital status and traditional considerations, it could not be ascertained that these factors are largely traditional.

#### **4.2.2.5 Reasons for Rejecting Promotion**

A significantly small number, that is, only fourteen women managers have rejected promotion once and four have rejected it twice. A frequency count is done as no other



separated from her husband and children. Secondly, both children were in examination classes and she felt they would need parental support. She summed up her feelings thus:

*'Actually for me I don't really mind, because it's not so much difference in terms of money, you have to sacrifice so much. My husband always encourages me. I always have reservations about myself, whether I can handle things like finance' (WM7).*

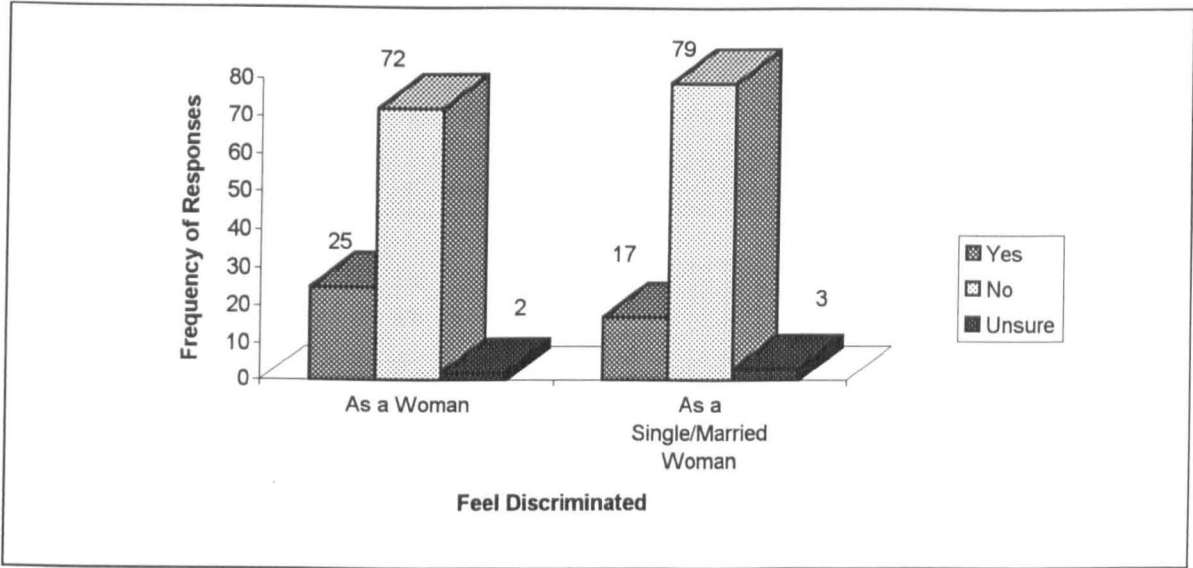
Her spouse explained it was a collective decision, between them after consultation with the children:

*'The reason was we had to struggle between the family and career, we had to choose one and she prefers to choose the family because if she was posted to another town, then it was impossible for her to look after the family, or me to look after the family, because we are in 3 different towns, so when conflict comes in, as a mother she will choose the family and as a husband I will choose the career, so that is why we made that kind of decision. If it was in the same town, that she can still look after the family, then I presume she will take it' (SS7).*

Although she offered other reasons for refusing promotion, the overriding factor was still family considerations. The spouse emphasised this, stating that if she is offered another opportunity in another town again *'if the two of us will be separated again, then there is no family'*. The explanation offered here confirmed the findings from the survey that competence awareness and family considerations are determining factors. It also corroborated the reasons respondents gave for their unwillingness or the need to review the options if offered promotion away from their present station discussed in 4.2.2.2 earlier.

#### **4.2.2.6 Experiences of Discrimination in Seeking Promotion**

Two questions on discrimination in terms of promotion were posed; whether they felt discriminated against as a woman, and secondly whether they felt discriminated against as a result of their marital status. In Chart 4.7, 72.7% of the women reported being given equal promotion opportunities with the men, 25.3% felt they did not have equal opportunities and 2 % reported they were unsure. The chart shows that a similar response pattern emerged in their answers to the second question. 79.8% reported that they did not feel discriminated against in promotion because of their marital status, 17.2% felt they were, and 3% were not sure. The majority felt comfortable enough to say no discrimination in promotional practices existed due to gender or marital status.



**Chart 4.7 Feel Discriminated Against in Terms of Promotion**

A breakdown of the frequency distribution of the various subgroups is shown in Table 4.29. The figures in the table could be taken to be representative of such sub-groups but the numbers involved are too small to carry out chi-square tests. The majority of the sub-groups of position, marital status and location reported that they did not experience sexual discrimination in promotion. A similar response pattern emerges for discrimination by marital status. However, more of those senior in service reported being discriminated against as a woman as well as a result of marital status. Those senior in service may recall the practice, until ten years ago, in the Sarawak Education Department of giving preference to men in promotion.



**Table 4.29 Crosstabulation - Feel Discriminated Against in Terms of Promotion by Position, Service, Marital Status and Location**

Groups & Subgroups	FEEL DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AS A WOMAN						FEEL DISCRIMINATED AGAINST AS A SINGLE/ MARRIED WOMAN					
	yes		no		unsure		yes		no		unsure	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>POSITION</b>												
Head	8	30.8	18	69.2	0	0	4	15.4	22	84.6	0	0
Deputy	13	21.0	47	75.8	2	3.2	9	14.5	50	80.6	3	4.8
HoD	2	22.2	7	77.8	0	0	2	22.2	7	77.8	0	0
<b>SERVICE</b>												
<10 years	13	17.3	61	81.3	1	1.3	8	10.7	66	88.0	1	1.3
10-20 years	8	47.1	9	52.9	0	0	5	29.4	11	64.7	1	5.9
> 20 years	4	57.1	2	28.6	1	14.3	4	57.1	2	28.6	1	14.3
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>												
Married	20	26.7	54	72.0	1	1.3	14	18.7	58	77.3	3	4.0
Single	4	18.2	17	77.3	1	4.5	3	13.6	19	86.4	0	0
<b>LOCATION</b>												
Urban	11	20.4	42	77.8	1	1.9	6	11.1	45	83.3	3	5.6
Rural	9	39.1	13	56.5	1	4.3	6	26.1	17	73.9	0	0

f = frequency                      % = percentage

Analysing their reasons (given in the open-ended questions) for feeling discriminated against, eleven of them quoted their personal experience. One head, who had served more than 20 years, stated “I have not been given the promotion as early as the men who started work the same time or later. Maybe discrimination happens unintentionally due to cultural influence”(OR). Another view expressed by a very senior manager was “the department regard married ladies did not have an interest in promotion. I have to wait so many years to get promoted compared to male counterparts with the same qualification and seniority”(OR). On the other hand, a single informant who is a middle manager, said “we, the single ladies get posted to areas or stations which are too remote on the ground that we do not have family commitments to shoulder”(OR). Obviously, the single and married women view discrimination differently. Based on their personal experiences, sixteen respondents denied discrimination exists. For example, one woman who had served less than 10 years said “As far as I am concerned my promotion was done based on merit (OR)”. Another contemporary said “I had been given the chance to work in Headquarters, as Senior Assistant (Administration) and Senior Assistant (Students Affairs) within the normal time frame(OR). Six of them commented on what they saw around them. For example one middle manager who had served less than 10 years mentioned, “Through my observation, men and

*women were given equal opportunity for promotion. What matters are their potentials and credibility” (OR).* Reasons, therefore, vary with personal experience and observation. Overall, those who have served longer conceded that discriminatory practices existed while those who joined the service later have not experienced them.

The findings demonstrate that most women managers do think of promotion somewhere along in their careers although many reported never having thought of promotion at the start of their careers. This may be attributed to the history of promotional opportunities within the Sarawak Education Department. It was only recently that the Department practised an open concept in promotion. Until then, leadership, even at school level, was always provided by the men. Despite their reported confidence in educational management, the women do not jump at any promotional opportunity. Most would consider various factors before deciding to accept or decline posts offered. They are very aware and conscious of the fact that the jobs, especially that of headship, entail very heavy responsibilities and need their total commitment and dedication once they are in post. They would prefer to assess their capabilities and experience to handle the job before they decide on the offer. In this way they feel that when their talent and ability are recognised, they will not disappoint the trust put in them. Married women managers, especially, acknowledged the importance of family considerations. With their strong sense of family, they tend to reject promotions that involve living away from home or those that mean they are unable to spend time with their young children unless they have domestic help. Although promotion subsequently means increased income, it was not a strong enough motivating factor, especially if too many sacrifices were necessary at the expense of family togetherness. A significant finding is that very few women educational managers (18%) have ever rejected promotion. Given another chance or once the barriers are removed, they do take up the promotional offers. The majority felt that in recent years they were given equal opportunities with their male counterparts in promotion.

### **4.3 Relationship between Traditional and Professional Roles**

To determine the relationship between traditional and professional roles, factors affecting the performance of women managers in their jobs were identified. Their responses to the question of what they considered had enabled them to do well in their jobs are examined. These reasons are then matched against the support and provision they receive from their superiors, the Department of Education, their spouses, children and other family members.

#### **4.3.1 Reasons for Success in Promotional Posts**

The reasons they offered for doing well are categorised as professional skills and competence, professional environment and traditional factors. As seen from Table 4.30, they reported skills and competence, traditional factors and professional environment in that order of importance. The majority reported professional skills and competence were attributes of great or very great importance for their excellent performance. In the professional environment category there was a mixed response. 62% of women managers cited a good working climate as essential for doing well in their job. 90% of them cited collegial networking as of great or very great importance in doing well and 85% identified the support of their superiors as important. The importance of status as educational managers was given a lower priority. Good qualifications and the presence of a role model are treated similarly. In the traditional considerations, the majority cited the support of husbands as crucial, followed by the support of their children, then their parents.

**Table 4.30 A Frequency Distribution of Reasons for Doing well**

	Of no importance		of some importance		of great importance		of very great importance	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>A. Professional</b>								
<b>A1. Skills &amp; Competence</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>17.2</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>46.3</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>35.6</b>
a lot of relevant experience	1	1.0	22	22.7	40	41.2	34	35.1
management training	2	2.0	19	19.4	43	43.9	34	34.7
growing sense of own competence	0	0	15	15.3	52	53.1	31	31.6
good qualifications	2	2.0	33	33.7	49	50.0	14	14.3
good communication skills	0	0.0	4	4.0	47	47.5	48	48.5
ability to delegate work	0	0	14	14.1	43	43.4	42	42.4
collective decision making	1	1.0	11	11.1	45	45.5	42	42.4
<b>A2. Professional Environment</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>28.2</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>29.3</b>
good working climate	1	1.0	6	6.1	31	31.1	61	61.6
presence of a role model	11	12.1	33	36.3	33	36.3	14	15.4
status that comes with the job	23	26.4	47	54	12	13.8	5	5.7
high expectations of the job	3	3.3	29	31.5	43	46.8	17	18.5
critical event that changed perceptions	11	12.4	49	55.1	17	19.1	12	13.5
collegial networking	2	2.0	8	8.1	50	50.5	39	39.4
support of superior	3	3.3	11	12.1	35	38.5	42	46.2
<b>B. Traditional</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>23.5</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>33.2</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>38.2</b>
support of parents	8	10.7	27	36.0	23	30.6	17	22.7
support of children	2	2.9	16	23.2	25	36.2	26	37.7
support of husband	1	1.4	8	10.9	24	32.9	40	54.8

*f* = frequency

% = percentage

In Tables 4.31, 4.32 and 4.33, Kruskal-Wallis tests carried out between position and seniority by professional skills and competence, professional environment as well as traditional considerations show no significant differences in the responses for the groups.

**Table 4.31 Reasons for Doing Well - Professional Skills and Competence by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position: Head	23	50.28	3.2684	2	.1951
Assistant	61	43.85			
HoD	9	59.94			
Seniority: < 10 years	12	48.67	.0910	2	.9555
10 - 20 years	60	47.37			
> 20 years	23	49.30			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.32 Reasons for Doing Well - Professional Environment  
by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	16	33.66	.4024	2	.8178
	Assistant	47	35.95			
	HoD	6	31.17			
Seniority:	< 10 years	10	31.55	1.0125	2	.6028
	10 - 20 years	48	35.80			
	> 20 years	13	40.15			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.33 Reasons for Doing Well - Traditional Considerations  
by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	14	28.57	.2864	2	.8666
	Assistant	36	27.33			
	HoD	5	31.20			
Seniority:	< 10 years	8	25.31	.3304	2	.8477
	10 - 20 years	34	28.81			
	> 20 years	13	27.54			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

In Tables 4.34, 4.35 and 4.36, Mann-Whitney U-Tests between marital status and location with professional skills and competence, professional environment and traditional environments also show no significant differences between the groups.

**Table 4.34 Reasons for Doing Well - Professional Skills and Competence  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	72	45.08	-1.2785	.2011
	Single	21	53.60		
Location :	Urban	52	37.19	-.1900	.8493
	Rural	22	38.23		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

**Table 4.35 Reasons for Doing Well - Professional Environment  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	53	35.54	-.0276	.9780
	Single	17	35.38		
Location :	Urban	36	26.65	-.5636	.5730
	Rural	18	29.19		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

**Table 4.36 Reasons for Doing Well - Traditional Considerations by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital	Married	53	28.00	-1.7201	.0854
Status :	Single	1	1.00		
Location :	Urban	33	25.21	-.9417	.3463
	Rural	14	21.14		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

The statistical tests conducted show that there are no significant differences between all the categories and the groups of respondents in their reasons for doing well.

### 4.3.2 Support Structures

The indicators for support and provision and the categories used to group them correspond to those used in reasons for doing well. Matching the two attributes indicates whether the managers are satisfied with support and provision in areas which they consider important attributes to doing well in their jobs. Table 4.37 shows that they reported receiving the most satisfactory support in the traditional attributes (matching those reasons for doing well). They reported receiving satisfactory to very satisfactory support from their husbands (89%) followed by their children (82.9%) and then their parents (78.6%); this order corresponds to their reasons for doing well. Professionally, they reported their own experience and growing sense of competence and skills (such as skills in delegation (83%), communication (86%) and decision making (81%) ) had helped them greatly in their work. They reported that they were not satisfied with the management training they had received though they did acknowledge its importance to them in doing well. Although support from their professional environment was rated the lowest, generally they were satisfied with their working climate, support from their superior and collegial networking, all attributes they consider important for doing well. Just like in reasons given for doing well, they reported not getting satisfactory support from their status, role models, and good qualifications.

**Table 4.37 A Frequency Distribution of Support and Provision for Women Managers**

Support and Provision	Not Satisfactory		Quite Satisfactory		Satisfactory		Very Satisfactory	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>Professional Skills and Competence</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>19.8</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>19.8</b>
A lot of experience	5	5.2	24	24.8	50	51.5	18	18.5
Management training	24	26.1	29	31.5	28	30.4	11	12.0
Growing sense of own competence	0	0	21	21.0	55	55.6	23	23.2
Good qualifications	3	3.2	17	18.3	61	65.6	12	12.9
Good communication skills	1	1.0	14	14.3	61	62.2	22	22.4
Ability to delegate work	3	3.0	14	14.1	57	57.6	25	25.3
Collective decision making	4	4.1	15	15.3	56	57.1	23	23.5
<b>Professional Environment</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>8.3</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>23.9</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>49.1</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>18.7</b>
Good working climate	5	5.1	12	12.2	52	53.1	29	29.6
Presence of a role model	12	15.2	21	26.6	40	50.6	6	7.6
Status that comes with the job	7	8.1	31	36.0	39	45.3	9	10.5
High expectations of the job	5	5.6	24	26.9	48	53.9	12	13.5
Critical event that changed perception	13	19.7	26	39.4	22	33.3	5	7.8
Collegial networking	5	5.3	15	15.8	52	54.8	23	24.2
Support of superior	3	3.3	16	17.4	44	47.8	29	31.5
<b>Traditional</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>39.2</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>44.3</b>
Support of parents	2	2.7	14	18.7	34	45.3	25	33.3
Support of husband	2	2.7	6	8.2	26	35.6	39	53.4
Support of children	1	1.6	10	15.6	23	35.9	30	46.9

*f* = frequency

% = percentage

Kruskal-Wallis tests conducted between position and seniority with professional skills and competence and traditional factors in Tables 4.38 and 4.40, show no significant differences between the various subgroups. In Table 4.39, there is a significant difference between seniority in service and professional environment ( $\chi^2=6.11$ ,  $p=.0470$ ). The longer they have been working, the more support they report receiving from their professional environment.

**Table 4.38 Support and Provision : Professional Skills and Competence by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	22	53.45	5.0408	2	.0804
	Assistant	56	39.43			
	HoD	8	44.63			
Seniority:	< 10 years	9	29.06	5.7116	2	.0575
	10 - 20 years	59	43.89			
	> 20 years	20	53.25			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.39 Support and Provision : Professional Environment  
by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	10	25.85	5.30	2
	Assistant	33	24.33		
	HoD	3	6.50		
Seniority:	< 10 years	3	6.67	6.11	2
	10 - 20 years	37	24.78		
	> 20 years	8	29.88		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.40 Support and Provision : Traditional Factors by  
Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	14	28.71	2.3880	2
	Assistant	31	23.13		
	HoD	5	31.20		
Seniority:	< 10 years	6	19.08	2.3730	2
	10 - 20 years	33	25.15		
	> 20 years	11	30.05		

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

In Tables 4.41, 4.42 and 4.43, Mann-Whitney tests between marital status and location with the three categories of support reveal no significance differences.

**Table 4.41 Support and Provision : Professional Skills and Competence  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	66	42.98	-0.35
	Single	20	45.22	.7233
Location :	Urban	49	34.45	-0.31
	Rural	18	32.78	.7546

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

**Table 4.42 Support and Provision : Professional Environment  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables	No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	39	25.00	-0.52
	Single	9	22.33	.6050
Location :	Urban	23	18.33	-1.20
	Rural	10	13.95	.2288

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*



**Table 4.43 Support and Provision : Traditional Factors  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital	Married	49	25.87	-1.2807	.2003
Status :	Single	1	7.50		
Location :	Urban	28	21.91	-.7308	.4649
	Rural	13	19.04		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

The tests conducted reveal that there is a significant difference between seniority in service and professional environment in terms of support and provision. There are no significant differences in the other categories examined.

To get a deeper understanding of the kinds of support available to them, the managers were asked in interviews about support from parents, superior and colleagues. All the interviewees professed to having supportive parents and/or brothers and sisters. One informant sums up their views of supportive parents:

*“supportive parents are parents who give you encouragement, motivation in whatever way possible for them. They can offer you advice based on their experience. And they take great pride in their children’s achievement” (WM5).*

According to the women interviewees, supportive parents give financial support in earlier years, provide moral support, give advice when consulted, always have a ready ear, and lend physical support such as helping with the children when needed. As one testified, they are *“supportive in the sense that they have never yet, since my working life, even as a student, prevented me from doing things which I really want to do, they backed me all the way” (WM4)*. When the question of the parents response to their daughters’ promotion was raised, one interviewee summed it up by saying *“oh, yes, they encouraged me to take it up. They know I deserved it, that I have the potential” (WM2)*.

The interviewees claimed that they are supported by their superiors who include their heads or previous heads, the Divisional Education Officer and the Sector and Sectional Heads from Headquarters. This validated the reported 85% who agreed that support of superior is of great importance to doing well (described in 4.3.1). All of them agreed

that they have been able to count on their superiors for sound advice and help, within the constraints under which they work. One informant revealed her strategy thus:

*"Yes, I really have them to thank for. I don't mind all the scolding as long as I get things done. I always go asking for this and that, I said never mind I am not asking these things for myself, but the way I see it with HQ or DEO, the more you know them, you call them, they are very accommodating.....I think the personal touch helps a lot" (WM3).*

However, there are areas in which they felt support from the department could be improved, especially financial allocation to schools, finance and support to attend courses, allocation of staffing, (both teaching and non-teaching) and managing students' disciplinary problems. The Deputy interviewed wished that her Head would make a clear distinction between the Senior Assistant (Administration) and Senior Assistant (Students' Affairs) so that she could concentrate on her own area of work.

All the interviewees said they could consult their counterparts on school matters. Four stated that they had no qualms about contacting both male and female colleagues. Two feel more comfortable communicating with male colleagues and explained this by stating:

*"Men are very open... they tend to talk about it, discuss, talk, laugh. We women are very secretive.... and we don't want people to think we think so great of ourselves, so we tend to keep quite, people ask then you say, yes...just so....And then if they really mean it and you start to ask some more, then they start to open up, otherwise you keep quite.... because we don't want people to have that kind of feeling" (WM8).*

Another gave a slightly different version :

*"I find it easier to get support from male colleagues than from female colleagues. ...Because my character, my nature is more like men. Through outside activities, like games, I used to join them...male colleagues, they are more obliged. Maybe you being a woman they want to show that they can protect you...." (WM7)*

and an equal number connect with females better :

*"Yes, I feel comfortable to contact male colleagues, but more comfortable with female colleagues. I think because we are of the same sex, we understand each other better" (WM4).*

The relationship between the reasons for doing well and support and provision provided is illustrated in Table 4.44. There is a very significant difference between professional

skills and competence as reason for doing well and support and provision ( $z = -3.93, p = .0001$ ). There are no significant differences between environment and traditional factors as reasons for doing well and support and provision.

**Table 4.44 Relationship Between Reasons For Doing Well and Support and Provision**

	Variables	Ranks		Cases	Mean Rank	z value	2-Tailed P
1	REASON 1 with SUPPORT 1	-	SUPPORT 1 LT REASON 1	44	39.10	-3.9287	.0001
		+	SUPPORT 1 GT REASON 1	22	22.30		
		Ties	SUPPORT 1 EQ REASON 1	18			
2	REASON 2 with SUPPORT 2	-	SUPPORT 2 LT REASON 2	20	21.27	-.7976	.4251
		+	SUPPORT 2 GT REASON 2	18	17.53		
		Ties	SUPPORT 2 EQ REASON 2	6			
3	REASON 3 with SUPPORT 3	-	SUPPORT 3 LT REASON 3	8	17.25	-1.4801	.1388
		+	SUPPORT 3 GT REASON 3	20	13.40		
		Ties	SUPPORT 3 EQ REASON 3	17			

*Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed- Ranks Test*

NB. REASON 1 & SUPPORT 1 refers to Professional Skills and Competence  
 REASON 2 & SUPPORT 2 referees to Professional Environment  
 REASON 3 & SUPPORT 3 refers to Traditional Factors

The findings show clearly that there is a strong relationship between the factors which contribute to women managers doing well and the support they receive, both professionally and within their traditional roles. The respondents rated traditional concerns highest followed by skills and competence, then professional environment as factors accounting for why they do well. These findings concur with the support and provision provided. A significant finding is that, the majority of women managers highlighted the importance of the support of their spouses in their jobs and the majority too reported receiving satisfactory to very satisfactory support from them. This refelected the complementarity in the partnership. The importance of other members of the family, that is, children and parents, to contributing to the women managers success in their careers are also recipocated in the support they provide. They considered management training to be of great importance but the training they received has not been satisfactory. They rely instead on their experience and the skills they have acquired at work. They reported good communication, delegation and decision making skills as attributes necessary for a good manager. In the professional environment, important considerations which they require and feel satisfied with are the working climate,

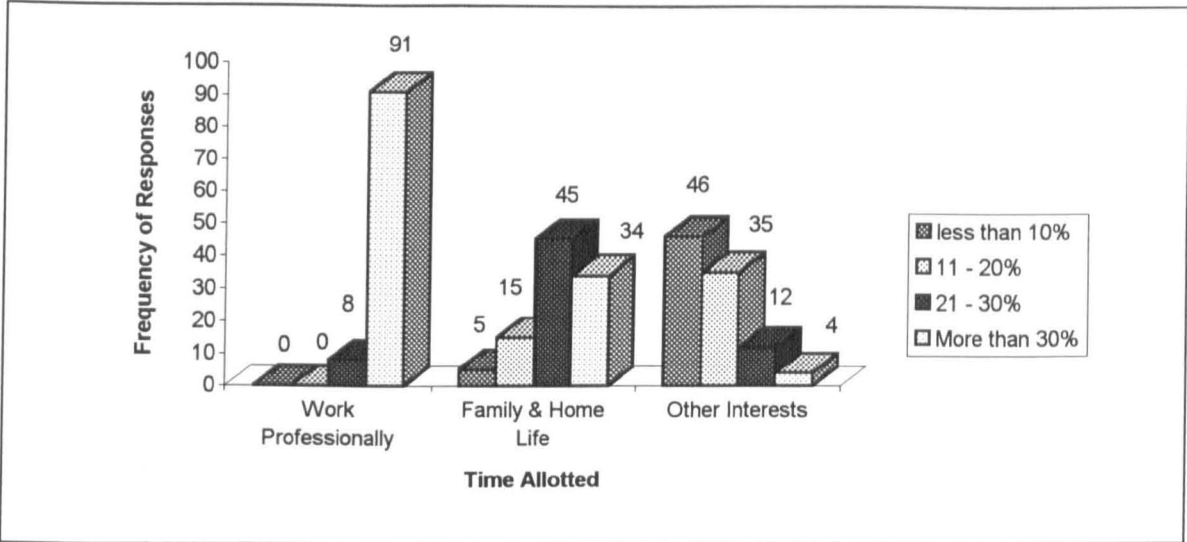
collegial networking and support of their superior. They do not give great significance to the presence of a role model nor to the status or prestige of the job.

#### **4.4 Professional and Traditional Roles Compared - The Challenges of Managing the Dual Roles**

Having looked at the women managers' perceptions of their professional and traditional roles and the relationship between them, the next step is to examine how they try to balance these roles. In this section the findings are drawn from both the qualitative and quantitative analysis. Their responses in the questionnaire reveal the time they devote to their respective activities, that is, work, family and other interests, and their perceptions of the conflicts they experienced, both initially and after some time on the job. Similar questions are asked in the interview pertaining to conflict, and time. The time-log diary further augments their usage of time.

##### **4.4.1 Managing Time**

It is generally assumed that running a family and being a career woman at the same time are demonstrating roles requiring good time management. The women were asked how much time they allocated to various activities and whether they perceived that they have made effective use of their time for these activities. Chart 4.8 shows the amount of time the women managers spent on three areas of activity: work, family and other interests. The chart shows that work accounts for the highest proportion of their time and other interests and responsibilities the least. The responses show that 92% reported spending more than one-third of their time on work, 34% spent a similar time on their family and only 4% could afford an equal amount of time on other interests.



**Chart 4.8 Reported Time Devoted to Work, Family & Home Life and Other Interests**

A breakdown of the frequency distribution is shown in Table 4.45. The response patterns between the various subgroups in all the areas show similar percentages of response. There was, however, a difference between the reported time spent on the family between heads (23.1%) and deputies (35.5%), on the one hand, and HoDs (55.6%) on the other. Reported time spent on the different areas also varied with time in service. Those senior in service spent more time with their family. Married women, too, spent more time with the family than single women.

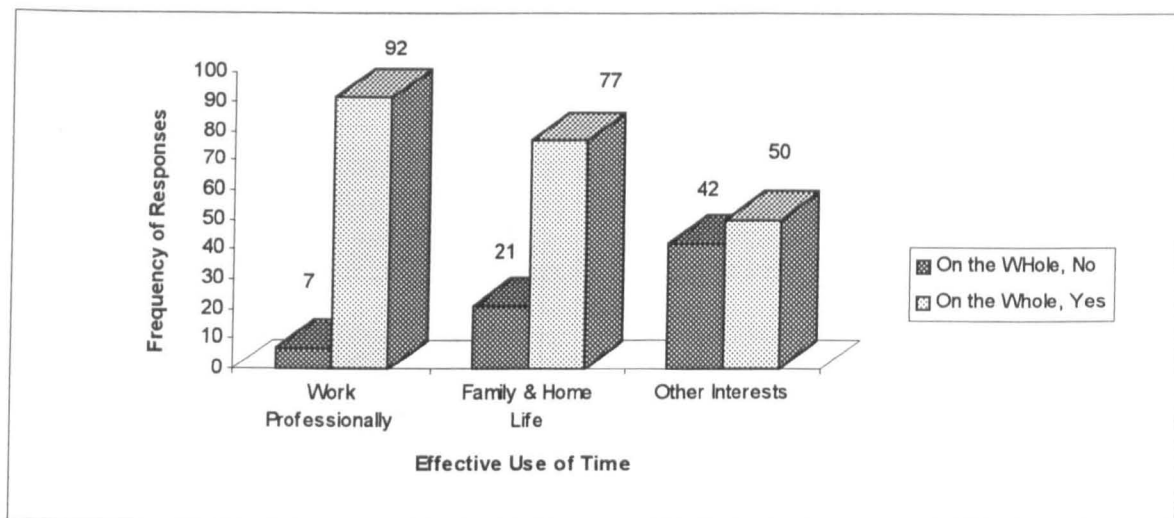
**Table 4.45 Crosstabulation - Time Devoted To Work , Family and Home Life and Other Interests by Position, Service, Marital Status and Location**

Groups  &  Subgroups	WORK PROFESSIONALLY								FAMILY & HOME LIFE								OTHER INTERESTS							
	≤10%		11-20%		21-30%		>30%		≤10%		11-20%		21-30%		>30%		≤10%		11-20%		21-30%		>30%	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
POSITION																								
Head	0	0	0	0	3	11.5	23	88.5	1	3.8	4	15.4	15	57.7	6	23.1	3	50.0	10	38.5	3	11.5	0	0
Deputy	0	0	0	0	4	6.5	58	93.5	2	3.2	10	16.1	28	45.2	22	35.5	28	46.7	21	35.0	8	13.3	3	5.0
HoD	0	0	0	0	1	11.1	8	88.9	2	22.2	1	11.1	1	11.1	5	55.6	4	44.4	3	33.3	1	11.1	1	11.1
SERVICE																								
< 10 years	0	0	0	0	1	7.7	12	92.3	0	0	0	0	10	76.9	3	23.1	5	38.5	7	53.8	1	7.7	0	0
10 - 20 years	0	0	0	0	5	8.1	57	91.9	4	6.5	11	17.7	23	37.1	24	38.7	30	50.0	19	31.7	7	11.7	4	6.7
> 20 years	0	0	0	0	2	8.3	22	91.7	1	4.2	4	16.7	12	50.0	7	29.2	11	45.8	9	37.5	4	16.7	0	0
MARITAL STATUS																								
Married	0	0	0	0	5	6.7	70	93.3	1	1.3	10	13.3	33	44.0	31	41.3	38	52.1	25	34.2	8	11.0	2	2.7
Single	0	0	0	0	3	13.6	19	86.4	4	18.2	5	22.7	11	50.0	2	9.1	7	31.8	9	40.9	4	18.2	2	9.1
LOCATION																								
Urban	0	0	0	0	3	5.5	52	94.5	3	5.5	9	16.4	23	41.8	20	36.4	28	52.8	18	34.0	6	11.3	1	1.9
Rural	0	0	0	0	3	13.6	19	86.4	1	4.5	4	18.2	12	54.5	5	22.7	10	45.5	8	36.4	4	18.2	0	0

*f* = frequency

% = percentage

Asked whether they felt that they used their time effectively, the majority felt they did in the areas of work (92.9%) and family (78.6%) as shown in Chart 4.9. There was no significant difference in their perceptions of whether or not they used their time effectively for other interests.



**Chart 4.9 Effective Use of Time for Work, Family and Other Interests**

In Table 4.47, crosstabulations of the various subgroups show that more than 90% reported that they have made effective use of their time for work. The frequency distribution shows similar responses for Heads and Deputies regarding effective use of time for all three areas, the highest being work and other interests least. Only 50% of heads and deputies perceived using their time effectively for other interests. HoDs, on the other hand, responded in the order of work, other interests and family. A significant finding is that all the HoDs reported using their time effectively for work and at the same time a very high percentage reported effective use of their time for other interests. The majority of those longer in service reported using their time effectively for work and family but not for other interests. There was no significant difference in the response patterns pertaining to marital status and location. All reported using their time effectively for work, family and other interests in that order.

**Table 4.47 Crosstabulation-Effective Use of Time for Work , Family & Home Life and Other Interests by Position, Service, Marital Status and Location**

Groups & Subgroups	Work Professionally				Family & Home Life				Other Interests			
	No		Yes		No		Yes		No		Yes	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>POSITION</b>												
Head	2	7.7	24	92.3	5	19.2	21	80.8	13	52.0	12	48.0
Deputy	5	8.1	57	91.9	12	19.7	49	80.3	27	47.4	30	52.6
HoD	0	0	9	100.0	4	44.4	5	55.6	1	12.5	7	87.5
<b>SERVICE</b>												
< 10 years	1	8.3	11	91.7	3	25.0	8	66.7	4	33.3	6	50.0
10 - 20 years	5	7.9	58	92.1	12	19.0	51	81.0	25	43.1	33	56.9
> 20 years	1	4.2	23	95.8	6	25.0	18	75.0	13	54.2	11	45.8
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>												
Married	5	6.7	70	93.3	14	18.7	60	80.0	32	45.1	37	52.1
Single	1	4.5	21	95.5	6	27.3	16	72.7	9	42.9	12	57.1
<b>LOCATION</b>												
Urban	5	9.3	49	90.7	12	22.2	41	75.9	23	46.9	24	49.0
Rural	1	4.3	22	95.7	7	30.4	16	69.6	13	56.5	10	43.5

*f* = frequency

% = percentage

The time-log diaries of eight of the respondents were used to elaborate on how they spent their time (examples are reproduced in Appendices 5a, 5b and 5c). The time logs corresponded with the findings of the survey. Overall they corroborated the statistical picture and revealed variations in different managers' patterns of the use of time. For example, although the average time spent in school was eight-and-a-half hours, this might be extended to ten or in one case thirteen (a normal working day of civil servants being eight hours). This is in addition to the fact that heads of boarding schools are expected to live in the quarters provided so they are literally in the school compound the whole day. Sometimes tea breaks were missed or shortened in order to maximise time available for school work. Seven claimed to take school work home although none, as revealed in their diaries, spent more than two hours in one week on this. The diaries show a diminution of time spent with their families, explained in the interviews as the result of tiredness: *"By the time in the evening, I am so tired, I don't even have time for the family"* (WM7).



Life is thus shown to revolve very much around the school, though on weekends, which is half of Saturday and the whole of Sunday, all do try to be with their families and friends pursuing their interests. In those times, the family is their priority and gets their undivided attention. One felt her own personal life had vanished, embroiled as it was between school work and giving attention to the family. In the interviews the women managers confirmed spending too much time at work, manifest in both their physical presence at the places of work as well as the school work they bring home. They attributed this to 'overconscientiousness', to their sense of commitment. Another informant was unaware of spending too much time at work until questioned and her response was quantified in terms of time spent on her various activities. The following words of one informant captures the typical viewpoint:

*"My husband feels that I spent too much time, more time than I should in my work. But I enjoy what I am doing, I find it very stimulating, very interesting, very challenging sometimes and because of that the time passes very quickly..." (WM1).*

These claims were confirmed in interviews with seven spouses who described their wives' responsibilities as heads as greater than when they were senior assistants. The spouses' responses support those of the women relating to how they spend their time. Many were able to empathise with the demands on their wives, having been in or currently holding similar positions themselves. One said:

*"Yes, obviously she spends more time now at work than before. But then that is expected, anybody who has worked in the organisation, the higher up you go, the more sacrifice you have to make in terms of time....." (SS6)*

Six of them mentioned that their wives brought work home, and that they assisted them when they could. One confirmed the wife's claim that sometimes she did have to bring work home, but he insisted that she did not do it. He described the mere act of taking work home as satisfying her conscience. Despite the workload, and having to bring work home in most cases, five of the spouses maintained that their family life-style remained the same. In contrast, two spouses commented that they felt the change, '*the longer time spent at work means less time spent with the children, and also less time on their hobbies*' (SS2).

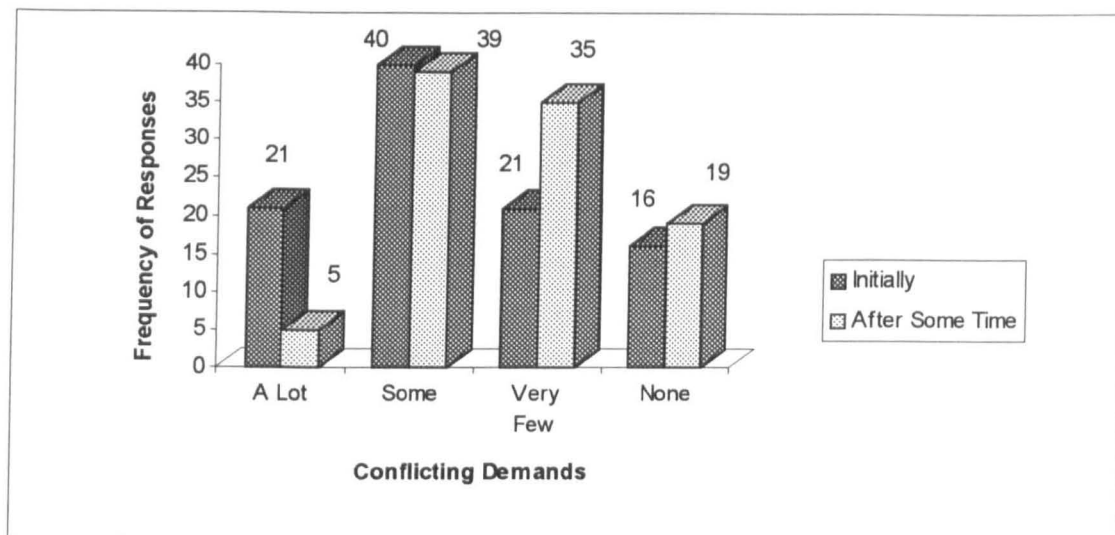
The findings show clearly that women managers in education do face challenges that are damaging to other interests when trying to combine their professional and traditional roles. Generally these women managers spend a lot of their time at work, the length of time varying in relation to their job. This finding is consistent with the nature of the job they undertake (see Appendices 1a and 1b). The demands on educational managers are undoubtedly very high and the senior managers could not spare as much time as their middle managers on home demands. The expectations of the job and the amount of time they felt they needed to spend on their work are reasons why they are incapable of spending as much time as they would like on other things. They are shown to be doing a juggling act between work, family and other interests, in which the weightiness of work demands threatens the other areas of their lives. The attempts to balance work (weekdays) and family (weekends) demonstrated this point. The personality of the women involved is a key factor here. The spouses verified this claim; they maintain that these women have always been conscientious in their work, whatever its nature. Married managers considered it essential to have understanding and supportive spouses while single respondents valued the support of other family members in organising their professional and personal times. These findings on their time management are then matched against their perceptions of the conflicts they experience.

#### **4.4.2 Conflicting Demands**

Women managers sometimes face the dilemma of prioritising family and work. In the closed questions of the questionnaire, respondents were asked about the extent of conflicts experienced between home and work demands at two stages of their careers: first, when starting as a manager and second, after they had some experience. There was no attempt to match respondents from 'initially' with 'after some time' in this particular analysis. No specification of the exact time span is given so the managers determine for themselves the intensity of the conflict they feel at self-determined times.

Chart 4.10 shows the extent of conflicts between the demands of home and work that women managers experienced at both stages. The majority reported experiencing 'some'

conflict both initially and after some time on the job. Only 21% perceived ‘a lot’ of conflict initially, this figure dropped to 5% after they became more familiar with the job. This corresponds to those perceiving ‘very few’ conflicting demands. The figures perceiving ‘none’ in terms of conflicts at the beginning and with experience are not significantly different.



**Chart 4.10 Conflicts Between the Demands of Home and Work**

A breakdown of the analysis by crosstabulation shows that there is a clear pattern of responses between people who experience conflict initially which is different from that of those who experience conflict after some time. In Table 4.47, heads perceived more conflict initially rather than when more experienced. Deputies and HoDs reported no significant change in the amount of conflict experienced over time except there was a decrease in those reporting ‘a lot’ of conflict. The extent of conflict varied with years in service. All three subgroups reported ‘a lot’ of conflict initially but reported significantly less when more experienced. The number who perceived that they experienced ‘some’ and ‘no’ conflict were the same initially and with experience. Significantly, those serving less than 10 years reported experiencing the same amount of conflict at both times. These are most likely HoDs whose work demands are much less than those of Heads and Deputies. Among those who have served longer, the number who reported experiencing ‘very few’ conflicts after some time on the job is nearly double the reported experiences of conflict initially. Irrespective of marital status, there were fewer women who perceived ‘a lot’ of conflict after the initial induction period. However, more of the single women reported perceiving ‘some’ conflict now but not initially.

**Table 4.50 Crosstabulation-Conflicts Between the Demands of Home and Work by Position, Service, Marital Status and Location**

Groups & Subgroups	A LOT				SOME				VERY FEW				NONE			
	Initially		After Some Time		Initially		After Some Time		Initially		After Some Time		Initially		After Some Time	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>POSITION</b>																
Head	7	26.9	1	3.8	11	42.3	10	38.5	6	23.1	12	46.2	2	7.7	3	11.5
Deputy	11	17.7	3	4.8	27	43.5	27	43.5	10	16.1	17	27.4	13	21.0	14	22.6
HoD	2	22.2	1	11.1	2	22.2	2	22.2	4	44.4	4	44.4	1	11.1	2	22.2
<b>SERVICE</b>																
< 10 years	3	23.1	2	15.4	5	38.5	6	46.2	4	30.8	4	30.8	1	7.7	1	7.7
10 - 20 years	13	21.0	3	4.8	26	41.9	24	38.7	11	17.7	20	32.3	11	17.7	14	22.6
>20 years	5	20.8	0	0	9	37.5	9	37.5	6	25.0	11	45.8	4	16.7	4	16.7
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>																
Married	18	23.7	5	6.6	33	43.4	30	39.5	15	19.7	29	38.2	9	11.8	11	14.5
Single	3	14.3	0	0	6	28.6	9	42.9	6	28.6	5	23.8	6	28.6	7	33.3
<b>LOCATION</b>																
Urban	11	20.4	3	5.6	20	37.0	21	38.9	11	20.4	16	29.6	11	20.4	13	24.1
Rural	5	21.7	2	8.7	12	52.2	11	47.8	3	13.0	7	30.4	3	13.0	3	13.0

An analysis between the various groups in respect of position and seniority using a Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova test in Table 4.48 shows there is no significant difference in conflicts experienced initially amongst the groups. Table 4.49, using a similar test, shows that there is also no significant difference in the conflicts experienced after some time on the job between these two categories.

**Table 4.48 Conflicts Experienced Initially by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. Of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F.	Sig.
Position:	Head	26	53.96	2.89	2	.2350
	Assistant	61	46.76			
	HoD	9	44.50			
Seniority:	< 10 years	13	51.38	0.13	2	.9358
	10 - 20 years	61	49.66			
	> 20 years	24	48.06			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

**Table 4.49 Conflicts Experienced After Some Time on the Job by Position and Seniority**

Dependent Variables		No. Of cases	Mean Rank	Chi-Square	D.F	Sig.
Position:	Head	26	49.08	0.21	2	.8984
	Assistant	61	48.82			
	HoD	9	44.67			
Seniority:	< 10 years	13	61.08	2.89	2	.2350
	10 - 20 years	61	48.26			
	> 20 years	24	46.38			

*Kruskal-Wallis 1-way Anova*

In Table 4.50, a Mann-Whitney U-Test carried out between marital status and location shows there was a significant difference between single and married women in their perceptions of conflicts experienced initially ( $z = -2.05$  ,  $p = .0403$ ). A higher proportion of single women, interestingly, perceived experiencing conflict initially than those with a family. There is, however, no significant difference between these two groups in conflicts experienced after some time on the job as shown in Table 4.51. The tables also show that there is, too, no significant difference between the reported conflicts initially or with more experience by those in urban and rural areas as was assumed.

**Table 4.50 Conflicts Experienced Initially by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	75	51.44	-2.05	.0403
	Single	21	38.00		
Location :	Urban	53	37.03	-0.92	.3535
	Rural	23	41.89		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

**Table 4.51 Conflicts Experienced After Some Time on the Job  
by Marital Status and Location**

Dependent Variables		No. Of cases	Mean Rank	Z score	2- Tailed P
Marital Status :	Married	75	50.19	-1.19	.2325
	Single	21	42.48		
Location :	Urban	53	36.72	-1.13	.2569
	Rural	23	42.61		

*Mann-Whitney U - Test*

The statistical tests show that apart from significant differences in conflicts initially between married and singles, there is no significant difference in the responses between the various groups either initially or with experience. They do experience some form of conflict at whatever stages of their careers.

The Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test carried out to establish whether there was a relationship between initially and with more experience in Table 4.52 showed that there is a highly significant difference between the two stages of conflict ( $z = -4.3413$ ,  $p = .0000$ ). Those who experience conflict initially need not also feel it once they are more experienced.

**Table 4.52 Relationship Between Conflicts Experienced Initially and  
After Some Time on the Job**

Variables	Ranks		Cases	Mean Rank	z value	2-Tailed P
Initial with experience	-	With experience LT initial	38	22.82	- 4.34	.0000
	+	With experience GT initial	6	20.50		
	Ties	With experience EQ initial	54			

*Wilcoxon Matched-Pairs Signed-Ranks Test*

In the case of seventy-four who responded in the open-ended questions on whether they experienced any conflicts between the demands of home and work, a manual count was done to match the responses of conflict initially and with experience. The spread of responses are as shown in Table 4.53. There is a higher proportion experiencing a lot (28.4%) and some (51.3%) conflicts initially compared to those having a few and none at all. Of those who experience perceiving 'a lot' of conflict initially, only 14.3% maintained the same level of conflict, the rest of them felt a reduction of conflict to

‘some’ instead. The table shows that there is a decreasing trend in the levels of conflicts experienced from initially to with experience; there is a decrease in overall response in ‘a lot’ from 21 to 3 while there is a shift in those experiencing ‘some’ conflict from 38 to 20.

**Table 4.53 Distribution of Responses to Open-ended Questions on Conflicts Initially and After Some Time on the Job.**

Levels of Conflicts Initially			Levels of Conflicts After Some Time on the Job							
			A Lot		Some		A Few		None	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>A lot</b>	21	28.4	3	14.3	18	85.7	0	0	0	0
<b>Some</b>	38	51.3	2	5.3	20	52.6	14	36.8	2	5.3
<b>A Few</b>	13	17.6	0	0	1	7.7	11	84.6	1	7.7
<b>None</b>	2	2.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	100
<b>Total</b>	74		5		39		25		5	

The conflicts are explained as constraints in terms of time which can be spent in meeting the demands of the husband and children “*things at home and at work needing my attention at the same time*” (OR). A middle line manager reported a lot of conflict “*between looking after my child and coming to school after school hours and between doing household chores and doing some paperwork at home*” (OR). It is the little time they could afford to monitor the children’s progress in education that causes anxiety to most mothers and this constraint of time is further aggravated if they have to do the housework as well. The following quotation from one manager who had recently assumed a senior position echoed the general feeling :

*“I have less time for my children in particular coaching them in their studies. I am too bogged down with work to take them outings, shopping, cinema, etc.” (OR)*

When the interviewees were asked if they had any conflict between these two roles, as a professional woman and a family person, three of the informants gave a definite ‘no’. One acknowledged a supportive and understanding husband while another saw her role as an educational manager as an extension of her family life. “*But I feel that as a wife and*

mother, I can play my role as an administrator better, because I feel that I can understand what they are going through" (WM3). She could empathise with the students better, and she has a very supportive and understanding husband together with good domestic help in the house. A third found that 'it's o.k.' though was quick to add:

*"At times I envy those spinsters, they can really devote all their time, their mind, not like us, there's too much disruptions" (WM2).*

Another informant gave a similar reaction '*I don't think so*', but when quizzed further changed it to the affirmative, volunteering that:

*"Yes, it's true, I really feel that. Sometimes I'd like to help the family out, sometimes because of certain conditions, it can't be done,..... I can't do that because I have to be in the school and there is no excuse to be away from the school, so it is very, very contradicting" (WM8).*

Four of the informants gave a definite 'yes' though maintaining they can cope. Two cited the especially difficult times when a child or the husband is sick, because they feel it is their responsibility to attend to this personally.

Two of the spouses maintained that there are no conflicts so long as the couple "*understand their primary function and do not try to get away from it*" (SS5). One explained it merely as a continuation of past practices:

*"Only the job changed, there's no conflict. Because you remain as a good mother, he'll remain as a good father despite the change in what you do. Last time my father and mother tapped rubber, now I extract teeth and she teaches. So it's only the job changed, not the responsibilities" (SS2).*

The other five spouses recognised the existence of conflict though three of them saw gradual erosion of such conflicts. One rationalised "*there is conflict, but not much, especially with the nature of our job*" (SS4). One who saw the continuing evidence of such conflict expressed his observation:

*"There's conflict, as long as the family structure is what it is now, and that structure is going to be there because it is being buttressed by religion and a lot of other forces, there is bound to be a lot of conflict. And the conflict doesn't only come from within the house, but more and more the pressure to change will come from outside as women's role, the professional management make extra demands, demands that wrests them out of their household" (SS3).*

The two lady Professors interviewed both share the opinion that the conflict is very real. Professor Wazir expressed the view that:



*"There's obviously a lot of conflict, because there's still an understanding in our society that if you don't work, in the sense that if you're not waged, you don't get a salary, then you're not liberated, you're not progressive. For you to be an emancipated Malay women then you've got to work, have your own independent income. Now that is part of a kind of Western perspective. But if you trace it long, long ago, the Malay women have always worked, she's not been waged, but she has always controlled her own income, whatever she gets it's hers, whether it's food, or jewellery or gold, or a piece of sarong. It's not something that the husband takes away to keep in the family pool. It is her own thing. So the whole notion of traditional role is actually very different from our stereotypical notion of what is traditional, because a traditional role is also a role which is very much geared towards economic autonomy, previously, and now, it is that way too. So it is a kind of double-edged sword that a woman, a Malay woman now feels she's still got to control household resources, the children, the labour of family, control the income of the family, for her to be an autonomous woman."*

This may be taken as 'domestic' but in the cultural context, the private or the domestic will become public. She defended this with:

*"When she's married and she's got a lot of say over the domestic resources, and her own personal resources, those resources can be used as a foundation, a launching pad for other activities which are public, communal activities, ceremonial, rituals and even business. But firstly she must be in control of the house, because the house is not domestic to women, the house is part of her self identification as a female, as a woman."*

The two professors recognised that there is conflict in the sense that a career outside creates tension between it and domestic roles, and perceptions of domestic roles. Although they are referring to Malay women, this is just as applicable to the other ethnic groups as there are a lot of similarities culturally.

Puan Sri Empiang defined conflict in this context as *".. when a woman who has been successful in her professional role that she has no time for other things, culture, tradition. The problem is if you get carried away"*. She verified this with:

*"Yes, there can be conflict unless you know how to adjust. I think there is room in both. The professional role of women, you are successful at the Corporate level, in the Department, as an international figure, but to me there is always the traditional role of a woman as a homemaker, as a role model to your children, as a provider of cultural inspiration and practice. There is always room to impart the relevant cultural practice in your family, so I think you can combine."*

However, her priority is clearly stated by: *"my perception has always been, anything that happens, my first consideration is my family"*.

The findings show clearly that, with the new opportunities provided for women in managerial roles, there are many challenges that they face in trying to combine their professional and traditional roles. Generally the conflict these women managers experience occurs either initially or after some time in the job or at both stages of their careers. The spouses share this view. The intensity of the conflict depends to a significant degree on the nature of the job they are holding, their working conditions, their ability to adapt to situations, and their family commitments. Some saw the added challenge brought on by the dictates of culture, both material culture and the cultural mores. The majority of the managers reported that they felt less pressured and thus experienced less conflict once they had adapted to the situation. Married women reported more conflict than singles though they, too, perceived that it becomes less after adjustments have been made. This may be due to the multiple roles that married women had to contend with on first assuming managerial positions. Married women, after all, have demands from children, husband and families on both sides to deal with, compared to single women whose family members (extended family included) are likely to be fewer. The conflict is real, but some indicate that they feel less pressure when there is a supportive spouse. The presence of a third party, either in the form of other family members but particularly reliable domestic help means the worry of routine household management is less. As the lady Professor commented, tradition within the society in context upholds that it is this domesticity which gives women the power or control over the household. The economic control of the family is of great significance to her and her identity as a woman and is one aspect which she will preserve. Hence, they do experience conflicts between the demands of home and work but it appears as a situation which can work to their advantage.

## **4.5 Strategies For Encouraging More Women to Become Educational Managers**

Having looked at how they view traditional and professional roles and the challenges they face in trying to harmonise them, the next task is to identify strategies which would enable more women to be in educational management in Sarawak. This is examined under two broad headings: suggestions from the women managers themselves as seen in the closed-ended questions and suggestions they made in the interviews. The open-ended questions relating to the women's aspirations gave information relevant to strategies which need to be developed. The spouses were also asked about some of the issues in the interviews.

### **4.5.1 Respondents Suggestions for Successfully Integrating Work and Personal Life**

Since a major problem for professional women is combining their work and professional lives, some would define a successful woman as one who has found the recipe to harmonise professional and traditional roles, the model woman. In this section, respondents were asked to list the three most important factors, in order of priority, which they felt would enable them to successfully integrate their work and personal lives. These are categorised as professional competence, professional environment and traditional factors.

Table 4.54 shows that the majority consider that improving their professional competence (44.9%) and professional environment (40.3%) is essential for a successful integration of their work and personal lives. Only a small number (14.9%) report traditional factors as crucial if they want to be successful in both roles. The category receiving the 3 highest responses are flexible working hours (17.2%), time management training (16.9%) and a life skills or personal development course (16.9%). The lowest 3 categories are responsibility leave for care of relatives (3.3%), career counselling (4.4%) and improved childcare arrangements (5.1%). Their concern for usage of time as illustrated in 4.4.1 is reflected in their responses to time management and flexible

working hours in this section. Their concern for their own skills and competencies is shown by 45% choosing a personal development course and listing it as their first priority, 25% as their second and 31% as their third. 41% of them considered it crucial to have flexible working hours to be comfortable in both their work and personal lives. The table shows that professional competence is given a higher priority than traditional concerns as factors necessary for the successful integration of work and personal life. As professionals, the women appear more concerned with their capabilities rather than allowing traditional factors to overshadow their career concerns.

**Table 4.54 Suggestions for Successfully Integrating Work and Personal Life**

	First		Second		Third		Total frequencies	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>A. Professional Competence</b>	<b>f = 133</b>		<b>(44.9%)</b>					
	49	36.8	46	34.6	38	28.6		
A Life Skills or Personal Development Course	22	44.9	12	24.5	15	30.6	49	16.6
Time Management Training	17	34.0	27	54.0	6	12.0	50	16.9
Career Counselling	2	15.4	3	23.1	8	61.5	13	4.4
Assertiveness Training	8	38.1	4	19.0	9	42.9	21	7.1
<b>B. Professional Environment</b>	<b>f = 119</b>		<b>(40.3%)</b>					
	41	34.5	40	33.6	38	31.9		
Rotational Duties in the School	5	14.3	15	42.9	15	42.9	35	11.9
Flexible Working Hours	21	41.2	14	27.5	16	31.4	51	17.2
Clear Job Specification	15	45.5	11	33.3	7	21.2	33	11.1
<b>C. Traditional Factors</b>	<b>f = 44</b>		<b>(14.9%)</b>					
	9	20.5	12	27.3	23	52.2		
Improved Child care Arrangements	5	33.3	2	13.3	8	53.5	15	5.1
Parental Leave for Sick Child	3	15.8	10	52.0	6	31.6	19	6.4
Responsibility Leave for Care of Relatives	1	10.0	0	0	9	90.0	10	3.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>99</b>		<b>98</b>		<b>99</b>			
f = Frequency                      % = Valid Percent								

Questions asked in the interview on this topic were based on a literature review and after an initial analysis of the questionnaire. Thus, the interviews gave further information on what the interviewees felt could be done in the interests of improved educational management in the State and women's access to it. Four main questions which the researcher considers as pertinent to facilitating the entry of women into

managerial roles were raised. These related to: (i) collegial networking (ii) management training; (iii) actions for the Department; and (iv) maternity leave provision.

On the importance of collegial networking, five of the interviewees were in favour of establishing a network, one liked the idea but was sceptical of its success, and two felt it was not necessary. Those in favour talked of the advantages of having it formalised for the sharing of ideas - grievances, problems, success and as avenues for brainstorming. Three of them thought a formalised body would allow them to discuss matters, as one said:

*"...because I believe women heads are very sensitive to a lot of things. Whereas if you talk along that line to a male head, he might think of it as simple, small matter... because I think all these small things lead to a lot of bigger problems, so that's why I feel we need some kind of outlet to share these grievances we have" (WM8).*

Two of them who were in favour had reservations about setting up a formalised body exclusively for women. One explained it as:

*"In fact it shouldn't be just exclusively women, otherwise the men will think we are trying to be exclusive, trying to discriminate against them. It can work the other way round. Right now we are saying that the men discriminate against the ladies because we are not given the kind of opportunities that the men are being given, there are some claims about that. We don't want that to happen either, we could have a principals' club. In fact the Education Department can initiate one. Like Teachers' Resource Centre, we can have one Principals' Resource Centre, and all the principals can gather, and that is also the place where we can set aside a time for all ladies to gather, quality time for the ladies" (WM1).*

One thought favourably of the idea but is sceptical of its successful implementation:

*"... Because networking to me is you don't lose contact, and you keep on going back for reference, discussion and there should not be any hesitation. Men are very good at it. Women are not very good, women are so full of suspicion" (WM5).*

Like another of her colleagues, she suggested alternatives, such as, setting up a home page, so that there is easier access to each other to overcome problems of distance and isolation.

Those against the idea questioned whether there was any need for networking exclusively between women. They feared that giving things names or labels can

sometimes generate opposition to them, whereas there are other means of keeping contact, such as, the phone. One said:

*"Is there a need? I don't think there is a need to be on our own as such. Again it depends on the objective of forming the group. Is it to improve yourself or to exert pressure on the men?" (WM6)*

In the interviews, all the women managers agreed that human resource management training courses should have priority. They suggested these to focus on areas such as motivation for heads and teachers, transformational leadership and human psychology. They were unanimous in stating that these courses should be pre-appointment to the post and then as refresher courses once they are already in post. Other training needs which they identified related to curriculum and financial management. The interviewees stressed that everybody should be given the opportunity of attending these courses which, in their view, would enhance self development. Courses and seminars have their place. One described them as:

*'good for exchanging of ideas, the informal things that goes within the seminar itself that is more important. I always look forward to that, how people do things in their place. It's really an eye opener to me.....It's not spelt out in circulars.... if you haven't been a head before, you need to be taught all the knickknacks. But if you are already in the job after a few years, it's more of exchanging, even new things' (WM3).*

In addition to courses directly relevant to the job, the interviewees also felt that there was a need for self advancement courses, such as, higher degree courses. These would provide an incentive for heads to do well when admission to such courses is awarded for good performance. Completing such courses would increase confidence as well as giving education and training. One said:

*"The Department should create more chances for the educators to improve themselves by providing opportunities for scholarships to do Masters or Ph.D. I think it is time for us to have more qualified people in the Department" (WM8).*

Various suggestions were made on what action the Department should take to improve educational management in Sarawak. One suggestion was to identify people who have the potential to do well in managing schools. Once identified, candidates should be sent for some form of training, on management theories and practical training. The on-the-job training should include attachment to a senior head as is done in some departments. Understudying one who is very experienced, organised and efficient would be a good

learning experience. The senior assistants in schools could be given such opportunities for shadowing exemplary heads, that is, the mentor-mentee system in operation, before they are allowed to take charge of a school. Serving an apprenticeship for at least a month, or during a very busy time of the year would allow the aspiring head to help and at the same time learn about the job, so both the head and assistant can benefit from the association. Only then will the potential candidate be assessed and she can consider whether or not she is ready and prepared to accept the post. This works on the same principle as that existing for teacher trainees, the trainee taking over some duties of the class teacher, and the latter providing guidance and direction. This practice, if adopted, would support the idea of 'back-to-back' promotion which has been discussed before by the Ministry but not put into practice because of personnel constraints. Besides training their deputies, the interviewees felt that heads should be encouraged to give responsibilities to teachers to prepare them for managerial duties.

Another head suggested that posts should be advertised (as is currently practised for primary schools) so that the right people will apply. She commented:

*"They apply knowing that they would be there, and they would be happy to be there. It's O.K. if they are more junior than others, but as long as they have the necessary qualifications, that is what matters - people who are qualified and willing, that would make a difference to the system especially in rural areas. In fact the younger they are the better, they are the 'stayers' since they are too young to apply for early retirement - so why not make somebody do something they will be happy about?" (WM1)*

On support services, one interviewee commented particularly on the humane aspect:

*"The Department should be more attentive to problems caused by separation between families. For example, it would be better to ask them before issuing the appointment letters whether they want to go, or at least hint it to the family" (WM4).*

The semi-structured interviews concentrated on the question of childcare as an important support service. Questions were posed to both women managers and their spouses. Six of the women strongly welcome the idea of setting up crèches in schools or a cluster of schools. They reasoned that this would make it less stressful for teaching mothers if they could have access to their children during working hours. These crèches could be set up in a separate building in the school, and one of the interviewees had even

included this in her plan for when the school is relocated to a new site. She described an ideal situation:

*".... Every school should have a crèche. Because primary and secondary should be together, it should be planned that way. Then it follows it is logical to have a crèche nearby because the crèche will not only serve the community with working mothers but also the teachers" (WM1).*

She went on to add:

*".... That is why we are trying to work towards smaller sized schools that serve the community, rather than a school with 2000 to 3000 population, that is almost impossible for the principal to manage. We should go for smaller schools that are community-based, housing-estate based rather than city-based. The caring concept is still there, whoever works they will benefit, everything will be conducive, and everybody will be happy" (WM1).*

One informant mentioned that a male head, in an attempt to encourage female teachers to come back to school during weekends and afternoons, suggested that a room be set aside for teachers' children. This would be of great value to teaching parents since many childcare centres are only open during office hours. Another informant mentioned that she had already discussed with her staff the idea of renovating an empty staff quarter for this purpose. Although, in principle, she supported the idea of paying for a childminder, she would much prefer the Department do their share as part of the caring society concept they expounded.

Two of the informants who had reservations about school-based childcare made the point that while school-based childcare centres might help a little they would not provide all the answers. One recounted her experience:

*" I have many lady teachers in school, unless they are assigned a certain duty, then they will come for extra time, otherwise they will not. They just want the time for themselves, including the single ladies" (WM6).*

Another preferred to explain it thus:

*"... sometimes women managers tend to forget that there is the other part of their life that they need to look into. And then they depend entirely on the system (childcare). It can be done, but I suppose we must always remember our roles" (WM8).*



On a more pragmatic note, she remarked:

*"I think first thing first, they should first of all handle the heads, making sure that things are being taken care of properly - proper training, proper exposure, they should look into that first" (WM8).*

Related to the question of childcare is that of maternity leave. Currently women enjoy 42 days paid maternity leave for up to five children, and spouses can apply for 3 days paternity leave upon the birth of their child. Questions on whether this duration is sufficient were posed to both the women and their spouses. Three of the women agreed that based on their own experiences as mothers and as school managers, 42 days is adequate time to recover and be back at work. One said:

*" Well, now that I am a head, I think that is too long, but when I was a teacher, I felt that is too short. I do sympathise, I mean, you cannot really generalise. I do have teachers who have easy labour, who have all the support system at home, so they come back and to them that is enough time. But there are others even a few months after that, you still see as if they're just out of maternity. I think what is important is their home life, whether they can manage it" (WM3).*

If need be, she agreed women can apply for extended unpaid leave, but added that in some instances this may not be necessary since *"we still have the back up of our extended family system"*. From their own experiences, the other two said that if maternity leave was extended they might get bored staying at home while at the same time worrying about work after such a long rest. Thus, they too were not in favour of extended unpaid maternity leave. One informant voiced the opinion that since Malaysia is not a welfare state, it would be unfair to taxpayers if maternity leave was extended to 3 months. She agreed, however, that mothers should be allowed unpaid leave without forfeiting their seniority.

Four informants thought 42 days was too short for a mother to fully recover, and preferred at least 2 months to have a proper rest, breast feed their babies and be healthy enough and mentally prepared to face problems at school. The 60 day period had come up for discussion by the government agency, but at that stage had yet to be officially approved. One informant thought that 3 months is a reasonable time and would allow consideration to be given to difficult deliveries and post-natal depression.

Whatever reasons were given, all of the interviewees acknowledged that, currently, granting longer maternity leave would create difficulties as the country is still lacking in graduate teachers. Professionally we need the services of these women, and until such time as the graduate teaching force is increased at all levels, there will be insufficient relief teachers to cover those on maternity leave.

Questions on childcare provision, maternity leave and the type of support and assistance they would give their wives to enhance their performance were posed to the spouses. All the spouses agreed on the value of setting up childcare facilities for working mothers, although one did express reservations, as in, “ *whether it will help women managers whose work schedule would go definitely beyond the hours of these child minding facilities*’ (SS3). His comments stem out of his observations that oversees, such facilities are provided for mothers who work on a part time basis and this would not be compatible with the schedule his wife has to observe as an educational manager.

On maternity leave, three spouses concurred that 42 days was sufficient time for physical recovery. One of them explained it as:

*“So far as I have heard no woman has complained. And no management has complained that is too long. It’s a mystery how they come with 42 days, why not 30 days”* (SS2).

The last remark was made with reference to the fact that traditionally the confinement period within the societies concerned was 30 days before a woman was considered ready for her usual activities. Another spouse agreed with the stipulated time for maternity leave but was also in sympathy with those who are heavily pregnant. He suggested that they be given leave from their seventh month of pregnancy onwards to give mothers the opportunity to rest and make whatever preparations necessary for the birth of the baby. At the same time it would be more attractive for relief teachers when they cover duty for a period of 3 months. Another spouse shared the idea of half the women interviewed by being in favour of 60 days, saying:

*“I would fight for 60 days from delivery.... but that period should be as long as economically possible. It’s for looking after the infant....because a child needs to know the mother, that’s the most critical part of life, your relationship with your parents, your mother in particular, you learn to be loved, to associate, I think 40 days is a bit too short”* (SS3).

Yet another spouse was in favour of 2 years, even if it means unpaid leave. On the question of unfairness, he remarked:

*"... but what is unfair if you have the whole 2 years with the child which is your primary function. And your husband should be the one to provide for the family"* (SS5).

On the growing emergence of more professional women, all the spouses viewed this as a healthy trend. They agreed that there should not be sexual discrimination in opportunities. More women are going in for tertiary education and with the manpower shortage, the country should capitalise on the availability of these resources at hand.

One remarked:

*" The fact that, compared to other parts of Asia, we have an education system which allows that to happen, that women's access to education with relatively less hindrance ... and with the knowledge based technology coming to the forefront, more women will be up there....." (SS3).*

He acknowledged the importance of family values by:

*" I think one ought to put the question of family values in perspective. If you can think of a static family value, a family value of 50 years ago... everything change. We cannot replicate family of 1950 today... but as long as you believe in the institution of a family, we should not look at it as a decay.." (SS3)*

He disagreed with the view that social ills in society are explained as a consequence of working mothers. Another spouse explained it as:

*"We are going back to the old system where both husband and wife work for the sake of the family. The traditional system is where both husband and wife are working"* (SS2).

All the spouses mentioned that they would give full support and space for their wives' career advancement but would leave the decisions to the wives. Two were even willing to relocate if the need arose so long as the family were together. All the spouses maintained that keeping the family together as a unit was their main priority. As one said:

*"Yes, it would be a problem in the sense if it breaks up the family. It has nothing to do with the profession, but the location of the profession. I think regardless of where you are, if it keeps on relocating the family, it's critical to the decision. If I have to make a decision on whether to support that, it will have to be base on whether it balances whatever she gains out of it, to upset the family, not to me in particular, but the family as a unit" (SS3).*

In summary, women already in educational management considered there is great scope for more women in educational management, alongside the male educational managers, without eroding the position of men. In their view opportunities in educational management should be given to men and women with no gender bias by management. However, given the proportion of females to males in the teaching workforce there is a strong case for more women being appointed to management positions. Their responses to the questionnaire showed that women managers take their work seriously and do not make family or traditional concerns excuses for inability or incapability. Instead of rating the family as crucial to successfully integrating their personal and professional lives, they gave it less prominence than professional competence and skills development. This issue recurs in most of the findings. They did, however, acknowledge the need for good time management and flexible working hours which would take into consideration the management of their personal time and time with their family. Overall their responses resembled those from the questionnaire. Collegial networking does not, as yet, appear as a high priority for those questioned and they do not attach much importance to role models, status and qualifications. It may be that collegial networking through proper avenues has not been developed even though it appears that there have always been linkages with colleagues, both male and female. It is clear from the interviews that the interviewees have the ability to relate to their male as well as female colleagues and have no difficulties in dealing with their male staff and students. There did not appear to be gender bias in the way colleagues support each other and there was little support for women only networks.

The research shows that there is much support for having geographically distributed management training courses, both for the knowledge they offer as well as the opportunities provided for making exchanges and links with colleagues. The areas identified for the Department to improve educational management in the State are those which the Department or Ministry have discussed but are not able to implement as yet, because of finance and personnel constraints. The problem of childcare is not a major one but some experience difficulties because househelp is now not as available as it used to be and many of our managers who have migrated to the towns and cities have lost the extended family support structure readily found in the villages. For this group, and in

order to meet future demand, managers see the need for good childcare facilities growing in prominence. The spouses supported this development especially where childcare extends beyond the hours of existing childminding facilities. It can also be deduced that both the women managers and their spouses agreed that the maternity leave currently given should be extended when it is economically and physically feasible. In the meanwhile they support the granting of unpaid maternity leave without forfeit of seniority. The spouses acceded that the female workforce is an integral part of the country's manpower and is essential to the development of the country. The country needs its working women and male managers should be sensitive to gender issues and put into practice directives which aim to make the best use of the skills of all the workforce.

## Summary

This chapter has presented in four sections the major findings from the survey questionnaires, the semi-structured interviews and the time-log diary. Section 1 described the women managers' perceptions of their traditional roles and the sources of these perceptions; the next section looked at their perceptions of professional roles and examine the association between the traditional and professional roles. In section 3 the challenges women managers face in trying to combine their professional and traditional roles was examined. Section 4 outlined the strategies that can be adopted to enable more women to take up managerial roles in the education system. Graphic presentations, tables of figures and summaries of results of the analysis carried out using frequencies and cross-tabulations and non-parametric tests, such as Mann-Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis, were used to illustrate and highlight these findings. The next chapter will focus on discussions and recommendations arising out of these findings.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to analyse the perceptions of women managers in education in Sarawak with regard to their traditional and professional roles. It identifies the challenges they face in their dual roles and how they try to harmonise any conflicts they experience. The study therefore addresses the following issues:

- the perceptions of women educational managers of their traditional and professional roles and the relationship between them;
- the challenges women managers face in trying to combine their traditional and professional roles;
- the strategies which facilitate the entry of women into management roles in education;
- the relevance of western literature in explaining the situation of women managers in education in the Sarawak context.

The main purpose of this chapter is to discuss the data in a way which can inform aspiring women managers and policy makers of strategies they can adopt in facing the challenges of dual roles. The chapter summarises the findings presented in Chapter 4, highlights the major points and discusses them in the light of the conceptual framework which was presented in the literature review of Chapter 2. Differences between the experiences of women managers in Sarawak and those reported in the Western

literature are identified. The implications of the study will also be addressed in relation to future research in this field. General recommendations are put forward as well as recommendations for policy makers and future researchers, which are based on recommendations from respondents as well as those of the researcher.

## **5.1 Perceptions of Traditional and Professional Roles and the Present-day Context**

The research has shown that in Sarawak there is an association between the traditional homemaking role and women which is also evident in the international literature. The interview data and the review of literature specifically about the Malaysian context showed how the traditional roles need to be understood. The study revealed that the perceptions of all the women, whatever their subculture, did not prevent them from seeking promotion. This is in contrast with Western literature which says that women often perceive that they have to make a choice between a career and the home. This acceptance of traditional roles by women in Sarawak who have achieved senior positions in education implies that for them, the religiocultural system to which they belong is not a constraint on their efforts to reach the top.

In Sarawak the transition of women from work within to work outside the home was not difficult because women and men have complementary roles in this traditionally-agricultural-based society. Bilateralism makes room for this symbiotic relationship to persist. As the findings from the study and the review of the Malaysian literature revealed, male and female tasks within the home are becoming less clearly defined. There exists co-operation between husband and wife which facilitates the upward mobility of both men and women in their career paths. The importance of the family structure was repeatedly emphasised by those interviewed. Women's economic contribution is recognised within these subcultures, thereby promoting the idea of working women while acknowledging the heavy responsibilities they have in performing dual roles. In recent times spouses are increasingly sharing responsibilities with their wives, giving women more time to pursue their careers. This is in addition to the

considerable facilitating factor of the 'helper'/grandmother/young female/cousin as childcarer/domestic helper for Sarawakian women which has made it possible to maintain full time work outside the home.

The study has shown that power is distributed differently between the genders in various contexts and especially in the private and public spheres. Power distribution is culturally determined and the rate at which this is changing varies within the cultures studied. Within the tight Chinese culture change is slow whereas it is happening more quickly among the Ibans and Malays. Among the Chinese the potential contribution of women to the economic advancement of the community is the factor which determines the rate at which their status is improving. The complementarity existing between the genders in Iban and Malay communities has meant that women's participation in the workforce of the country is merely an extension of their earlier involvement in the economic advancement of their families.

Cultural background is important in understanding women's dual roles as it determines perceptions of traditional roles. How women perceive their roles will depend on their experiences, upbringing, culture and religion. It was not the intention to give prominence to culture in the study. However, the interviews conducted and the Malaysian literature revealed the importance of the various subcultures in determining perceptions. The respondents in the study recognised the 'conventional' perceptions of the traditional roles of women, but very few observed them within their nuclear families. This was confirmed by their spouses. In contrast, universalism is assumed in western studies of the status of women in educational management. This study, however, has shown that cultural background together with religion and upbringing are determinants of (but not constraints) perceptions of the traditional roles of women in Sarawak and women's work inside and outside the home. Further, the findings have shown that universalism cannot be assumed when studying the status of women in educational management in the State.

This study has also demonstrated how women managers in education in Sarawak perceived their traditional roles in relation to their professional roles. They saw the



nurturing role of women, usually associated with the domestic sphere, as facilitating their professional role as educational managers. Their traditional skills and cultural 'advantages', in their view, assisted them to be good educational managers which they defined as being dedicated and committed to their jobs. The integration of their nurturing and professional roles was a driving force in pursuing their careers. Their strong inner locus of control, defined by their belief in their own abilities and reinforced by success, contributed to them being good educational managers. The women managers were concerned about advancing their careers, although not in the early years. Their spouses and family members supported and shared their pride in their success. However, in spite of the cultural acceptance of women working inside and outside the home, when there were opportunities for promotion they were very careful to accept or reject them only after giving consideration to their implications for family life. The majority made the family their priority. Married women tended to prioritise their families over career moves so there was a greater risk of rejecting promotion if it involved relocation. Geographical immobility was another factor explaining their reluctance to apply for promotion in Sarawak where 61% of secondary schools are rural or in the periphery.

The study has shown that in Sarawak in recent years, women have been given equal opportunities with their male counterparts in promotion. Thus organisational barriers, such as discrimination in promotional practices, are not seen as insurmountable. Such barriers to the advancement of women in the economic sphere and the world of work do not exist to the same extent as in the west as described in the Western literature. While Western literature, such as Al-Khalifa (1989), refers to management as masculine, Janat (1993) cites Hofstede <sup>1</sup> (1984, 1980) whose findings seem to indicate that the Malaysian culture exhibits feminine values. Al-Khalifa argues that women teachers' images of headship are based mainly on men in post, thereby contributing to a conception of management as masculine and making it less attractive for women to apply for managerial posts. In contrast, Hofstede (1994) concluded that Malaysian culture was relatively feminine and is therefore likely to be supportive of women in

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<sup>1</sup> Hofstede (1980,1984) measured the difference in masculinity of cultures of individuals in more than 40 countries and concluded that Malaysian culture was relatively feminine.

management. It appears that the reasons given for women not being interested in promotion in the western world, relating to their conception of management as masculine, do not apply in Malaysia. This research has shown that the women's reasons for rejecting promotion were mainly due to being posted to places away from their homes when they had heavy family responsibilities. However, this research also demonstrated that there have been instances of "weekend" families when women managers agreed to take up posts outside their previous station on the understanding that they would be posted nearer to their homes when vacancies arose.

Good support structures are important for women's success in their careers. Findings from the literature and the research illustrate that there is a strong link between factors contributing to doing well and the support women managers receive both within their traditional and professional functions. The research showed that the women managers received a lot of support from their spouses in their personal and professional lives; support was also provided by their parents and children. There is a tendency for women with very young children not to seek promotion since they believe their children are too young to understand and support their mothers' constant absence from home. Older children see the benefits of working mothers and they take pride in their mothers' achievements so they are usually supportive. It would appear that support structures, such as maternity and paternity leave, childcare and childminding facilities which are addressed in Western literature are just as relevant in Malaysia. The study's findings, as well as the Malaysian literature, have shown that the provisions mentioned above do reduce tensions for women managers; a relief from childcaring or a sharing of that responsibility leaves them more time for other duties including the demands of work.

In meeting their professional demands management training was important but not as significant as the experience and skills they acquired on the job. The women managers indicated preferences for improving their skills in communication, delegation and decision making. These findings indicate that there is a need for support structures and for some skills training to be available if women are to seek promotion.

The findings provide evidence of women making significant progress in the education sector. The trend is for greater participation by women in educational management. In theory, it might be argued that the number of women in educational management as heads or in senior positions in SED and MOE should increase in proportion to the number of women teachers. Whether this will materialise depends on the commitment of the policy makers to follow through recommendations in the National Policy for Women in Malaysia, which has helped lay the foundations for a positive effort to enhance the position of women in society, particularly in the professional field.

## **5.2 The Dual Roles - A Hypothetical Conflict or An Unfinished Agenda?**

The research has shown that women educational managers in Sarawak face some conflicts when they try to combine traditional and professional roles. The intensity of conflict depends on the nature of the job, working conditions, their own adaptability, and family commitments. Anybody who opts for a career outside the home (the dual career roles) will, for example, have tensions in time management. In common with the career progression of other women educational managers in other countries, it is observed that it is not work outside the home that the women managers reject, but the notion that they have no control over their working hours. They want to be good professionals and family members but to be both is difficult. The conflict arising from dual roles is further magnified with the increasing involvement of women in the professional arena which requires handling very demanding jobs. As this research and the review of the literature reveal, juggling between home and work can mean so many demands on their time that there is little left for their personal lives. Rubinstein<sup>1</sup> (1997) compares this to the pre-industrial age when there was no division between work and leisure, or between the home and workplace. Work is not only becoming more individualised but is also overtaking and absorbing the whole of the employees' time, so that there is a blurring of work and non-work life. In this context, women managers are pulled in two directions and it falls to them to negotiate a compromise to diffuse

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<sup>1</sup> Rubenstein, L., a Senior Industrial Officer, wrote on 'Work and Family: a Privilege or a Right?' in the Australian Council of Trade Unions' National Voice. She discusses issues pertaining to combining work and family in Australia.

tension. This may be a justification for the need for a more humanised workplace and working conditions (which takes into account also women's particular responsibilities such as baby care and breastfeeding) that cater for a person's self-fulfilment. Such a development would need to take into account employees with family responsibilities (both women and men). Questions asked of women managers in Sarawak in the study need also to be addressed to their spouses, if a full understanding of the challenges a family faces is to be achieved. This would provide men's perspectives on their roles in the family and as workers. Research on spouses in similar managerial positions could demonstrate how partners in dual career families play their respective roles within the family and how they work to complement each other.

For women managers in Sarawak, there is also the added challenge of culture, both material culture and the cultural mores. The research has shown that there is an emphasis on women as providers of cultural inspiration and practice. Since a mother is seen in Sarawak as being naturally close to her children, she is expected to be mainly responsible for inculcating cultural and traditional values in them, including those of their respective roles within the family. Thus the values will be handed down to the next generation, which means that the roles of males and females as identified by society and tradition will continue. The conflicts between personal and professional lives can occur when the two types of roles a person assumes are different yet overlapping; in this case the role of wife and mother existing simultaneously with her role as an educational manager. The two roles are considered different: one personal, the other professional; yet both roles, which involve caring and nurturing, show an overlap of functions. These conflicts between their traditional and professional roles are best understood by the women themselves in the context of the subcultures with which they identify. Lessons can be learnt from examples of successful women who have overcome perceived difficulties. There are variations in experiences but the research shows that the successful women managers in the study have developed individual coping strategies (for example, having support structures, delegating at work) to deal with perceived difficulties.

The research has also shown that, irrespective of whether they are married or single, the women managers' ability to handle conflict improves with experience. The conflicts perceived in early years are greatly reduced when they have found strategies to cope with job demands. The pressure is lessened further when there is a supportive spouse in the case of married women managers. Not surprisingly, single people experience less conflict when compared with their married counterparts, as their responsibilities in the family are less. Both the single and married women educational managers claim that in recent times they have not been disadvantaged by virtue of their sex and marital status in promotional exercises, so this was not a cause of conflict.

Although they do experience some form of tension in their dual roles, some of the women managers in the research did not regard their dual roles as conflicting since they found their functions as school managers an extension of what they did at home. For these women, this, plus the fact that they had a good support structure for childcare and housework, meant that the conflict was hypothetical - it was a conflict that never was! These successful women responded to conflicting pressures in ways that allowed them to realise their ambitions. Their roles as educational managers enabled them to extend their caring and nurturing roles from home to their place of work. Their spouses, who were interviewed, shared this view. In fact, there were spouses who were willing to relocate to accommodate the wives' careers. This is a considerable step forward in how women's careers are viewed, when compared to an often-held view, such as that described in another context by Cunnison (1994), that the husband's job must be given a higher priority (p.89). In those contexts the reason why the husband's job takes precedence is because the husband often earns more than the wife and the wife often leaves teaching, at least temporarily, to start a family. However, in Sarawak the research has shown that there are spouses who are willing to put their wives' career before their own.

For a minority of women managers, however, the conflict was real; it was an unfinished agenda as long as the family structure, which is buttressed by religion, continues as it is. The conflicts they perceive now, having had experience in the job, were no less than

those in the early stages of their career. To them it appears that women's never-ending struggle to balance their work and the rest of their lives is not getting any easier.

Therefore, conflict is perceived in various ways by the women educational managers in Sarawak, which means they must develop individual strategies to overcome perceived difficulties and harmonise their dual roles. Proposing guidelines for overcoming conflict between the roles of home and work may not be a panacea, but lessons can be learnt. Together with support structures, such guidelines can facilitate a smoother entry for women into the world of educational management.

### **5.3 Implications of the Study**

The major implications of the study fall into three categories: understanding women managers in a South-east Asian context; future action to support women in educational management; methodologies for researching women in educational management. First, regarding gender issues, the study enlightens and enriches our current understanding of women managers, by providing a South-east Asian perspective. It reveals how traditional values have always played an important part in both private and public lives and how these have a bearing on the roles of women, whether they are workers or managers. It provides a new dimension for understanding the new roles of women in a country where traditional values are still strong. One spouse interviewed observed:

“Before the 1980s, before we were educated, we were not really aware of these gender roles, we only sometimes appreciated them. At first I was not aware of the gender roles of women in a modern work setting. I mean from a management point of view, I was not aware of them, it seems certain work is only done by women, certain work by men. Do you think that management is now gender sensitive? I think most people, most men, want to appear to be gender sensitive, otherwise you do not look civilised if you're not showing gender sensitivity”.

His words illustrate the trend among men managers in the country now to be cognisant of the needs and expectations of both men and women when making decisions and policies. But the degree of 'openness' to gender sensitisation is more localised than across the board. The Malaysian literature illustrates that policies pave the way but

managers who are the implementers may need to be made aware of the necessity to implement such policies, especially if it is in the interest of the nation to capitalise on the best human resources possible. Asmah (1993) stated:

High standards cannot be achieved if the skills, competence, attributes and motivation of women are ignored and are allowed to go to waste. In the spirit of Vision 2020, there has to be a change in the attitude towards women and their suitability to be at the top of the management ladder in the universities.

Secondly, it was the intention of the study to make recommendations for improving current practices in two areas:

- (i) To increase awareness of decision makers at the SED and MOE of the views of women teachers about promotion which can contribute to improved decision making regarding the placement of women educational managers;
- (ii) To make proposals about how the SED can tailor their training programmes to the needs of women educational managers.

A further outcome of the study is its legitimization of the value of 'talking to others' when trying to understand the situation of women managers. The study included the perceptions of spouses to provide alternative perceptions to those of women managers themselves, but found no major contradiction in their perceptions of their own roles, duties and responsibilities relating to the amount of work carried out by each party. The study also incorporates the views of those who have rejected promotion at least once and sometimes twice. This gives an understanding of why some women are not successful and identifies the barriers they have encountered en route to advancement in their careers. The role of religion, that is, Islam and Christianity, as seen in the findings, and the different cultural contexts (which was not discussed explicitly in the Malaysian literature on women in educational management as those studies were not culture specific) are also examined.

The following question emerges from the study: is a policy of positive discrimination or affirmative action necessary to promote the advancement of women in a society which

acknowledges that men must lead in the family? The general attitude seems to be that such a policy may not be necessary, given the increasing trend of girls to compete with boys for places in higher education in various fields, so they will eventually get their share of managerial positions. The study showed that the majority of women perceived they had not experienced discrimination in their careers. But since there is still a lack of female involvement in policy and decision making roles (as illustrated in the Malaysian literature), a policy of affirmative action may be necessary to secure positions for women at top management levels. Another area of concern which needs greater attention is the impact of childcare needs on the career advancement of women. Both this study and the Malaysian literature revealed that men in management positions are just as concerned as women managers about this matter (although it may not have the same impact on their careers, that is, they do not have to give up work).

A final implication of the study is the methodological approach. The use of both paradigms, qualitative and quantitative, has provided rich data on women in educational management in Sarawak. This was a departure from the feminist's preference for qualitative approaches. It demonstrates that the use of varied methodologies can enrich and enhance studies on women, thus supporting Maynard and Purvis's (1994) advocacy of a range of methods to study gender issues. That the survey included all women managers in the State meant that the findings are generalisable while at the same time having the depth through the interviews that qualitative research provides. Thus the study validated the claim of having both depth and breadth.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Recommendations arising from the research are discussed under three broad categories; a general recommendation regarding impediments to advancement and possible solutions, recommendations for policy makers, and recommendations for future related research regarding women educational managers. Some of the recommendations are acknowledged as ideals and may not be feasible in the current situation of Sarawak since they relate to infrastructure, the geographical location of schools and the



availability of resources such as staffing (particularly graduate teachers) and development expenditure.

In making recommendations, the researcher is aware of the opportunity for the MOE and SED to capitalise on the readiness of women to work outside the home. They are ready to be an equal part of the workforce; to advance their careers; to take on senior positions; and to take positions away from their families in the short term. Culture is not a constraint but adjustments to existing policies may have to be made if more women are to join the workforce as well as harmonise different expectations. Lack of attention to the conflicts that may be experienced is likely to diminish their performance in their promoted posts. The MOE and SED need to be highly sensitive to these when posting women to senior positions because geographical location is an important factor for women managers.

#### **5.4.1 Impediments to Advancement and Possible Solutions**

This study and the literature reviewed illustrate that women managers do not represent a homogenous group in terms of life-styles, so context is important as is the cultural dimension. It thus challenges the universalist approach that tends to be applied in the study of women in educational management. These contextual and cultural differences lead to differences among women managers in the challenges they experience and in their definition and interpretation of conflicts. These perceptions change over time. What was perceived as conflict in previous decades may not represent conflict today or in the future. Historical observation has shown that the lifestyles and priorities of people differ within particular time frames. People also assume different roles at different times and what may have been perceived as a role conflict in the past may not represent a conflict as they move on in their lives and face new challenges. A redefinition of conflict also needs to take into account geographical location, since the study and the literature have shown that perceptions of conflict vary between cultures as well as between subcultures. This means it is necessary to recognise the changing priorities in people's lives as their circumstances alter since there are bound to be role changes. The research

has shown, for example, that as children get older they require less caregiving, and these older children lend their mothers support in their careers and at home. Such mothers can, therefore, devote more time to work, volunteer roles or nurturing relationships and/or developing other interests.

Discussions in the 'Working Mom's Internet Refuge' network in the Western world identify various problems which working mothers face. One message is clear from these discussions: "if you are trying to run a home like your mother and have a career like your father, forget about it". These are incompatible demands which are making women "exhausted by being responsible for everything in their lives". In this study, Professor Fatimah made a similar point. She illustrated her case by stating that when women initially joined the workforce, many of them tried to play the good housewife role to the extent of waking up as early as 5.00 a.m. so as to be able to prepare lunch for the family, before going to work. However, in her view, in recent times many of the women workers are re-evaluating the situation by taking into account their own needs and physical well-being besides taking care of their family and their job. This 'asserting of their own identity' is now gaining ground among women managers in Malaysia. One proposal put forward in the discussions is that it is time for a new definition of success and a more humanised workplace (but they admit this will not be easy), where individual worth is recognised and not seen to be just a management tool. Women are now saying that they are looking for success in all parts of life, leisure and family, too, besides success at work. Their message is clear: they are going to carve out space for these other domains and are not going to let work impinge on it. To this can be added Segall's (1993) comments: "It is, therefore, not going to be enough merely to attract more women into management jobs through training programmes. What will be equally important is to recognise and understand their difficulties and give them the support they need to become effective and successful". This summarises the attitudes that need to be adopted by the women managers themselves and those expressing concern for working women in the country. Ultimately this will make organisations more productive while giving the women the space they need to develop their potential.

International literature acknowledges that some women just need to work to enhance their self-esteem and emotional well-being. This is especially true if they are employed out of choice and hold jobs that are sufficiently challenging and interesting. This motivation applied to women in this study too, as illustrated by their accounts of their work, the challenges they encounter, their willingness to move on (to accept promotion), and how they have tried to work out strategies to reduce tension from their dual roles. The women took a lot of pride in their work and their successes as did their spouses and family members. Moreover, women who hold managerial jobs not only contribute to the financial well-being of the family but also have more power and influence within the family. In this study (where women have economic control in the home), this is not a new phenomenon. It means that their earnings form part of the family income to provide a better life for their family, instead of having to rely on the spouses to hand them money to spend. Marshall (1984) remarked that such women managers could be more interesting and compatible spouses (pp 200-1) and many couples in this study described having partners in similar fields as a bonus. These women, too, can serve as interesting role models for their children. Instead of denying women opportunities for work outside the home, or forcing women to choose between work and the home, it would be in the interests of all to exploit these readily available resources and provide women with opportunities for advancement. Recognition is needed of women's capabilities as well as their needs if they are to advance professionally.

Another issue for women is the 'not enough time syndrome', mirrored in women's experience of time pressure and time poverty. This is reflected in the study, and supported in the literature, both Malaysian and Western. The demands on managers should be realistic so that they have some time to devote to their life outside of the workplace. Lifestyles which simplify lives benefit the children of working mothers. This study and the literature have shown that women sometimes say that family responsibilities keep them from applying for and assuming administrative positions. This is not because these women think that they could not do the job, but because they believe the costs would be too high for their families and themselves. Childcare provision would free many women from some of their family responsibilities and enable

them to give more consideration to their careers. This study highlights the concern of both women managers as well as men managers about the need for good childcare provision. It would improve this situation if both men and women in top management took responsibility for ensuring that appropriate steps are taken to provide adequate childcare. Researches on childcare services for working parents have been carried out in Malaysia (Noor Laily, 1984; Kamariah, 1986; Husna, 1997). Their findings could be the starting point from which to explore the best possible areas for providing good childcare and reducing the tension between the two roles that working parents have. There have been directives that seek to provide childcare facilities for staff in government departments but this has yet to be put into practice.

The number of women entering higher education is sometimes taken as an indicator of the status of women. If the numbers of women are fewer than those of men it could indicate that men are dominant and control power and women. This study confirms the observations found in the Malaysian literature that female students fight competitively for places in higher institutions of education and are equally represented with men. This equal opportunity does not transfer to equal representation in management and other senior positions as yet. A policy of affirmative action may be necessary to favour women in certain fields, including those in very senior positions, to address the imbalance of the sexes due to the headstart that men enjoy. Those involved in policy making should seriously consider speeding up the process by which more women are placed in senior managerial posts.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for Policy Makers**

The intention of the study was to increase the awareness of decision makers at the SED and MOE of the views of women teachers relating to promotion. This, it was hoped, would improve decision making regarding the placement of women educational managers in future promotion exercises. Despite the fact that many of the women educational managers have successfully negotiated a balance between their personal and professional roles, the research has shown that there are still some who shy away from assuming managerial positions because of their anticipation of role conflict. The present

practice of appointing candidates to posts as heads will eventually be replaced by a system where headships, (but not schools), are to be advertised when there is a sufficient pool of candidates from which to choose. This may mean fewer women in such posts if they are reluctant to apply for them because of anticipated conflict arising out of their dual roles. The administrative machinery has to intervene so that the best possible candidates can be deployed to fill vacancies. Advertising posts may mean that only those genuinely interested apply and become 'stayers' in the post. The study has shown that many women managers identified a need for training prior to assuming managerial roles, and the proposed new approach to appointments may make this a more urgent requirement.

The women managers considered improving their professional competence and skills a priority for a successful integration of their work and personal lives. They prioritised professional pre-post training in human resource management, personal development, time management, curriculum and financial management as basic training needs. In the respondents' view, having the basic competencies and skills was important before starting a job which entails many responsibilities. This would not only give them confidence to face their teachers and students but with the knowledge acquired from training, they might be able to offer workable solutions to problems posed. For example, as financial managers, they need to know the processes and procedures on making acquisitions, instead of relying on their financial clerks as is the current practice by new heads. As curriculum managers, they need to be able to provide leadership in order to mobilise the various subject panels. As instructional leaders, they should be able to supervise and offer guidance on the teaching-learning processes. Although they can learn on the job, having appropriate and pre-post training via policy implementation is essential to ensure professional managerial outcomes.

Women managers identified time management training, a life skills or personal development course, assertiveness training and career counselling as important if they are to successfully integrate work and their personal lives. They agreed that these courses should be given as soon as they have been identified as potential candidates for promotion. After undergoing the training programme, it was suggested that potential

candidates should be free to choose whether or not to accept the challenge of promotion. This is an ideal situation which may not be practical given the current lack of qualified graduate teachers and resources; but in the future with more graduates and resources, it could be a solution to solving the problem of uninterested heads or non-performing heads, both men and women.

The study has shown that the respondents did not feel that it was necessary to provide training programmes specifically for women, which did not include men. They did not want segregation or differential treatment. They did, however, identify as valuable the selection of potential candidates from among HoDs and Deputy Heads for attachment to senior and experienced heads for a period of one month. Such attachments would help to ensure that candidates have 'hands-on' experience from one who is qualified to guide them. The belief is that a prepared manager would not only be better placed to compete for advertised posts, but could also better serve the interests of the students and staff they are going to manage. The respondents also pointed to networking as one means of linking with colleagues, but the general feeling, again, is that it should be with all colleagues, not just among women. This view is not supported in most parts of the world, East and West, where women's networks seem to naturally evolve and are deemed necessary for professional support: there are still fewer women in positions of responsibility, and the glass ceiling often exists though it is always disguised. Networks can support women managers and women entering non-traditional jobs as the research has shown. But it is insufficient for women alone to network; men must take their part and make their contribution too.

This study confirmed Cunnison's (1994) finding that proportionately fewer married women than men are willing to move to schools out of commuting distance of their homes (p.89). If the country continues to advocate the importance of a strong family unit as the basis of the social structure of society and promotes the 'caring concept', then the MOE as a whole and the SED in particular need to be seen to support the family. Great care should be taken of and consideration given to preserving the family as a unit while at the same time not marginalising single women when postings are made.

One way of encouraging more women to join their male counterparts in managerial positions would be to adopt flexible working hours. Details of this would need to be carefully worked out so as not to jeopardise the day-to-day running of the school. It could start by re-examining the duties and job specifications of all promotional posts in schools and teacher training colleges. Flexible working hours could be extended to the male workers as well so that the couple could share responsibility for their family. Resource constraints may mean that it is unlikely that flexible working hours will be an option in the near future and neither will part-time work, for the same reason. A school is an institution where the manager needs to be physically present to provide the leadership required. If the message for a more humanised workplace and working conditions is to be applied in the school context of Malaysia in general, and Sarawak in particular, then double session schools should be reconsidered first. Having double sessions has many implications for family life, if either or both the mother or father is a teacher or headteacher, and the children attend such schools. There are too many disruptions and compromises involved in different time schedules. Ideally, all schools should offer a single session, if family life is to be harmonised. Many of the secondary schools in Sarawak are boarding schools and managing such a school is equivalent to running two schools and is a heavy responsibility. If all schools offered one session, then their size would be reduced which would make them more manageable in terms of staffing, students and resources.

In common with other research findings, this study has demonstrated that having young children is one of the barriers to women's career paths. It is, therefore, imperative that good child care provision be put on the agenda by the policy makers. In the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996) it was conceded that the relatively low participation of women, despite the increase in their educational attainment and the buoyancy of the job market, was, to a certain extent, due to the lack of affordable and quality child-care services and flexible working conditions for women. Having crèches in the workplace, which can be shared by other nearby institutions, is one solution that the Department could consider supporting, especially in the context of urban areas where there is less evidence of the extended family system in practice. The emphasis here is on 'good' facilities which

include space and facilities as well as the staffing of these childcare centres, so that parents would be confident that their children were well looked after.

#### **5.4.3 Directions For Future Research**

Further research on a similar topic might build on this study and explore the possibility of a comparative study of the perceptions of men and women managers on role conflict. It would be interesting to find out how men in a traditional society like Sarawak view their roles at home (as there are increasing numbers of women at work and men are increasingly sharing household duties) in relation to their work. By comparing their views with those held by the women managers both sides of the picture would be presented. An in-depth study using non-participant observation could also provide further insights into the traditional and professional roles of women managers and would counter any bias in self-reporting. Life-history accounts, such as those put forward by Ribbins (1997) in order to understand and study the individual career paths of the seven headteachers in his sample, could assist aspiring heads and practising heads (both men and women) alike to re-evaluate themselves. Ribbins' methodology allows for a more all-encompassing perspective than other studies, as it is concerned with the progression of the career of the informants. By considering the totality of experiences, which are susceptible to change over time, there is more scope for identification on the part of the reader. Such accounts recognise that there is no "norm" but choices to be made in following a career.

The intergenerational approach is another that could be adopted, using investigations of life histories as the major tool, involving the women manager, her children and her mother. This could prove more revealing in studying conflict by examining how the three generations, representing different time frames, perceive their different roles and any conflicts between their roles. A follow-up study could be carried out at a later stage if and when the daughter is herself a manager to see whether what was perceived as a conflict in the earlier generation is now perceived to be exacerbated, reduced or non-existent in the present generation. It would also be possible to assess the significance of



culture through the generations and to what extent culture has restrained or enhanced the advancement of women.

In comparative educational studies culture is becoming increasingly important. Culture-consciousness and what has been termed cultural capacity were significant in the present study. Brock and Cammish (1997) defined cultural capacity as 'the extent to which and the rate at which society is capable of absorbing cultural change'(p.118). To develop cultural capacity a society must, therefore, be prepared to choose courses of action which achieve desired changes while preserving stability within that society. In Sarawak the participation of girls in all levels of education means that this society has the cultural capacity to accommodate the participation of women in all levels of educational management. Future research could examine the cultural capacity of Sarawak to absorb the emergence of women in leadership roles in all aspects of society and in particular education.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, in the present-day context, women managers are trying to adapt to the current needs of the country which require men as well as women in the workforce, whether as leaders or followers. It has been shown that it was not a difficult transition to make as traditionally women have always worked, both in the home and outside on the farm. But the transition to leadership roles means that more adjustments have to be made, especially relating to family matters. Such roles are becoming increasingly demanding, particularly as one goes higher up the career ladder. The tension between work and the home is further amplified as very few working couples can now fall back on their parents for their children's upbringing; the extended family is no longer a common feature especially in the cities. However, many women have developed their own coping strategies and found success in their careers. Culture itself has not been shown to form a barrier to women's professional advancement although conflicts between their personal and professional roles are perceived variously by different subcultures and individuals. Organisational barriers, as in discrimination in promotion,

were discounted as a factor in women's advancement. More women are assuming roles as educational managers in Sarawak since many have found ways to overcome the tension arising from having dual roles. The SED and MOE, as policy makers, can contribute by providing relevant training programmes, enabling working conditions and work environments so that many more women are willing to take up the challenge of promotion. Men and women in top level management positions need to be more gender sensitive if they are to provide working conditions which enable more women to be in managerial positions.

Many features of the challenges women educational managers face in their dual roles and the coping strategies they develop, were explored in the study and have been reviewed in this chapter. It is hoped that the insights derived and the issues raised will provide avenues for further studies by national and international researchers in the area investigated.

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## **APPENDICES**

<b>Appendix 1a</b>	<b>Responsibilities of a School Head</b>
<b>Appendix 1b</b>	<b>Responsibilities of a Sector Head (Academic)</b>
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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SCHOOL HEAD**

1. To manage and supervise curriculum matters.
2. To manage and supervise co-curriculum matters.
3. To manage and supervise teaching and non - teaching staff.
4. To manage and supervise welfare of students, teachers and non-teaching staff.
5. To be responsible for finance and account.
6. To collect fees, especially Boarding Fees and to enter them into Government Revenue and GSA fund.
7. To plan physical development of the school.
8. To manage and maintain physical facilities of the school.
9. To manage and coordinate management of hostel and food ration.
10. To manage and organize teaching/learning resources.
11. To manage public relations and communication with other agencies, especially educational agencies and other Government and Private agencies related to education.
12. To carry out duties assigned by the Department or Ministry from time to time.

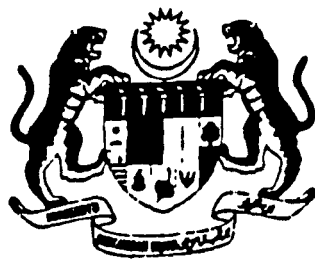
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**RESPONSIBILITIES OF SECTOR HEAD (ACADEMIC)**

1. To carry out induction and developmental central curriculum programmes at State level.
2. To Guide, supervise and monitor curriculum implementation in all primary and secondary schools in the State.
  - 2.1 Government schools
  - 2.2 Government Aided schools
  - 2.3 Religious Schools
  - 2.4 Vocational schools
  - 2.5 State-run Religious schools
  - 2.6 Private schools
- 3 To plan collection, analysis, summarising and reporting data on programme implementation for all subjects.
4. To plan, organise and report on studies and research relating to teaching-learning.
5. To plan, organise, monitor and evaluate progress, development, supervision and publication of teaching-learning materials.
6. To give professional advice to officers in the Curriculum Management Sector.
7. To give support services to:
  - 7.1 Other sectors in the State Education Department and Ministry of Education;
  - 7.2 State Government Departments;
  - 7.3 Private Sectors on any related matters.
8. Any other duties assigned.

(translated)



**MALAYSIA**

**THE  
NATIONAL  
POLICY ON  
WOMEN**

# **THE NATIONAL POLICY ON WOMEN (Translation)**

Published by:

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# **THE NATIONAL POLICY ON WOMEN**

## **1. PREAMBLE**

- 1.1** In accordance with the spirit of our independent developing nation, this National Policy On Women upholds the aspirations, to ensure loyalty, prosperity, justice, freedom and basic human rights for all its citizens.
- 1.2** In cognisance of the fact that women constitute an important potential resource, not yet fully recognized, the purpose of this Policy is to provide some guidelines and directions to all endeavours in the planning and implementing of the development programmes of the nation, so as not to overlook or neglect the interests and participation of women, both as targets of development as well as agents in the development process.
- 1.3** In realization of the fact that solidarity is the basis for achieving progress in our national development, this Policy emphasizes the need to draw up comprehensive and effective programmes for fostering a concept of unity amongst individuals as well as between governmental and non-governmental agencies.
- 1.4** Women have all along been involved actively as supporters in the political arena of the nation. The process of development necessitates the full involvement of both men and women. This Policy therefore reiterates the stand which emphasises the active and meaningful participation of women in the political arena.

- 1.5 This Policy takes into consideration the interest, endeavour and involvement of the Government, the needs of several organizations to support various international resolutions, the needs of various women's organizations, and the establishment of the Secretariat for Women's Affairs as the national machinery.
- 1.6 A number of important documents served as basic reference in the formulation of this Policy. These documents include :-
- (a) The Resolutions of the United Nations' End of Decade for Women (1976 -1985) Conference held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1985 with the theme "Forward Looking Strategies Towards the Year 2000".The resolutions as contained in this international document have been fully endorsed and ratified by the Malaysian Government.
  - (b) The Policy Declaration of the Commonwealth Secretariat on Women and Development that has been signed by the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Meeting in Nassau, Bahamas in 1985.
  - (c) "The Commonwealth Plan of Action" in support of the above Policy which was endorsed by the Malaysian Government at the meeting of the Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1987 in Vancouver, Canada.

- (d) Resolutions that were made at the Conference of Ministers In Charge of Women's Affairs held in Harare, Zimbabwe in 1987. The resolutions urged every government to formulate a policy on women and development for integration into the national development programme.
- (e) The basic working paper prepared by the National Advisory Council for the Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID) which was adopted at its meeting held on January 31, 1986.

1.7 At the national level, several consultations, seminars and workshop were organized by HAWA and the National Council of Women's Organizations (NCWO) with a view to obtaining consensus and support on the various resolutions made at various international conferences. The involvement of the government was sought at all levels.

## **2. THE OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL POLICY ON WOMEN**

2.1 The main objectives of the National Policy On Women are:

- (a) To ensure an equitable sharing in the acquisition of resources, information, opportunities and benefits of development for men and women. The objectives of equality and justice must be made the essence of development policies which must be people oriented so that women, who constitute half the nation's population, can

contribute and realize their potentials to the optimum.

- (b) To integrate women in all sectors of development in accordance with their capabilities and needs, in order to enhance the quality of life, eradicate poverty, ignorance and illiteracy, and ensure a peaceful and prosperous nation.

### **3. MAJOR PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES**

3.1 Major principles and guidelines of the Policy include the following:

- (a) That this National Policy On Women shall be aligned and coordinated with the National Development Policy, the provisions of the Constitution pertaining to the basic rights of citizens, the right of protection under the law, and the ideals of national unity and independence.
- (b) That the Policy shall place primary emphasis on the active participation and involvement of both men and women in the development process, at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages.
- (c) That this Policy takes into consideration the full potential of the nation's human resource, half of which comprises women. The nurturing and integration of female resource shall not only be confined to the traditional sectors but shall also extend into all sectors and all levels of the social, economic, political and cultural development.



- (d) That efforts to integrate women in development shall be the shared responsibility of the public and private sectors. The implementation of this Policy must be made the general duty of all concerned and shall not be the sole responsibility of any one gender, sector or agency.
- (e) That the special needs and interests of women and the special virtues of femininity shall not be jeopardized; the responsibilities of motherhood and family life shall neither be compromised nor neglected; and the dignity, morals and respect due to women shall not be sacrificed.
- (f) That the standard of education and knowledge of women be enhanced in accordance with their emergent roles and involvement in a dynamic and modern world and society.
- (g) That all forms of adverse discrimination on the basis of gender be eliminated in all matters of decision-making and subsequent action.
- (h) That information on target clientele and the impact of development programmes shall be gender categorized to enable appropriate assessment.

## **4. STRATEGIES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

- 4.1. In order to assist planners and implementors of development policy, the following strategies shall be developed to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness coordination and standardization of policy and action:-

- (a) Raising consciousness and understanding of all those concerned, and sensitizing them with issues and status of women;
- (b) Channelling women's issues through a central agency to various institutions and government bureaucracy in the form of administrative directives, programmes aimed at attitude modification and the building of commitment among those entrusted with the task of programme implementation;
- (c) Planning for the distribution of resource to the various sectors that are implementing programmes pertaining to women's issues; and
- (d) Securing the cooperation among the various governmental sectors, and between governmental and non - governmental agencies in the process of centralizing and coordinating all efforts aimed at enhancing the participation of women in development.

## **5. SPECIFIC STRATEGIES AND ACTION TIME-FRAME**

- (a) **Strengthening the Women's Affairs Secretariat as the Machinery for Women's Development**

The national machinery for the advancement of women is currently the Women's Affairs Division (HAWA) of the National Unity and Social Development Ministry, which serves as the Secretariat for the National Advisory Council for the Integration of

Women in Development (NACIWID). Appropriate action should be taken to further strengthen HAWA and to up-grade its status by establishing channels of communication with every relevant ministry and appointing coordinating officers in every State. In this manner, HAWA would be able to function more effectively in matters of concern to women as well as initiate specific development programmes for women at all levels.

**Time-frame for Action : Immediate and on -going**

**(b) Orienting Policy and Action Programmes of Government Agencies in order to include the Processes of Planning, Implementing and Monitoring Programmes for the Integration of Women**

In the formulation of policy, legislation, regulations and programmes by any sector or agency, consideration must be given to ascertain its impact, contributions and implications for women; its negative impact and effects must be avoided. A comprehensive system for coordinating and monitoring of programmes shall be created to prevent negative effects as well as to identify obstacles and constraints to women's participation, whether this be from the legal perspectives or in practice, so that appropriate action can be taken to alleviate them.

All development programmes must have strategies that would benefit women; the involvement of women at all levels, from the planning to evaluation stages at both local and national levels, must be guaranteed.

**Time frame for Action: Immediate and on-going.**

**(c) Education and Training for Sensitizing Government Administrators on Women's Issues**

To promote awareness and commitment of government agencies and institutions, gender sensitizing training programmes on women and development shall be held continuously for all government personnel.

**Time frame for Action:** Immediate and on-going.

**(d) Involvement of Non-Governmental Organizations**

The Government shall attempt to involve all Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and voluntary bodies in programmes and measures concerning women's development. In this manner, national efforts for integrating women in development can be strengthened.

Financial, technical, advisory and institutional support shall be provided on an on-going basis to women's organizations in order to encourage and promote their services.

**Time-frame for Action:** Immediate and on-going.

**(e) Elimination of Discrimination and Affirmative Action**

Special measures shall be taken to eliminate discrimination against women where it exists. In this context, existing lacuna in legislation for the protection of women should be rectified through affirmative action.

Special focus shall be directed towards the less developed areas, handicapped and disabled women, women in employment, women in health and women in education.

**Time frame for Action:** Immediate and on-going.

**(f) Promoting and Coordinating Research on Women's Issues**

Recognizing the lack of accurate and comprehensive data and information on the status of women, the government shall encourage and assist research and studies on women. In addition, the government shall ensure that all data collection by various sectors and agencies are disaggregated according to gender so that women's needs can be identified for more accurate policy, programmes and project formulation.

**Time-frame for Action:** Immediate and continuing

**(g) Allocations**

The government shall ensure that the Ministries and Agencies concerned utilize the approved allocations and adjust these allocations accordingly to meet the needs of programmes for women in development.

**Time frame for Action:** Immediate and continuing

## **6. PLAN OF ACTION BY SECTORS**

In order that this Policy be implemented effectively, comprehensively and integratively, a number of strategies are hereby listed, surveyed from various aspects which are closely related to the development and advancement of women:

## **6.1. National Machinery for the Integration of Women in Development**

- (a) The establishment of HAWA as a Unit in the Prime Minister's Department and as the Secretariat for the National Advisory Council for the Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID) is a positive step. In accordance with the policy of decentralizing the duties and powers of the Central Government, it is therefore appropriate that the machinery for women in development be upgraded, so that it can function more effectively to initiate various programmes at all levels of development. With this wider involvement, the machinery will be able to identify priorities, areas and targets for specific intervention and plan appropriate actions accordingly.
- (b) HAWA shall also have functional relationship with all other Ministries. It shall function as a focal point for the coordinating, monitoring and processing of issues to be transmitted to NACIWID for its views, advice and recommendations for action to be undertaken by the government and other related agencies.
- (c) Efforts to strengthen HAWA shall include various training programmes for its officers and staff so that the Division will be more efficient and dynamic.
- (d) The appropriate allocation of funds in accordance with the expanded functions and duties of HAWA shall be determined.

## **6.2. Health**

- (a) Women's health serves as an important indicator of their advancement and status. Not only is health important for women to achieve their rightful status, but as mothers and care-providers, they can influence the health of the family and community.**

**Besides needing protection from various common diseases, women need attention and care during pregnancy, child-birth and breastfeeding, assurance of obtaining nutritious food, protection from emotional and psychological stress, and protection from infection of dangerous diseases.**

**Women are also constantly exposed to experiments and medicine which may be dangerous especially those pertaining to contraception, abortion, and various infections. Cancer and various other communicable diseases further increase infant and female mortality and morbidity rates.**

- (b) In Malaysia the disparities between the urban and rural sectors in terms of quality health services and health facilities still exist. In the rural areas the lack of such facilities has resulted in many women being deprived of the opportunities to benefit from proper medical treatment and care. In many kinds of work women are constantly exposed to various occupational hazards, such as dangerous chemicals. In addition, illiteracy and ignorance still prevail among poorer women, whether in the rural or squatter areas.**

- (c) Actions that could be taken to improve women's health shall include the following:**
- (i) formulating a National Health Policy which takes into account the status, needs and health of women. A comprehensive concept of health shall cover physical, mental and emotional aspects;**
  - (ii) creating a mechanism to facilitate the participation of all sectors - (public and private) to ensure the equitable and just distribution of health services and facilities in all areas, and to ensure that appropriate measures are taken to remedy and improve the situations according to local priorities;**
  - (iii) encouraging and developing the knowledge and practice of both modern and traditional medicine suitable to the needs and abilities of contemporary society;**
  - (iv) implementing an effective policy for the prevention of drug abuse and addiction by involving all parties and levels;**
  - (v) enacting laws that can provide protection to patients from irresponsible practitioners of medical and health care. Victims of rape and violence shall be protected from adverse and sensational publicity that could undermine their dignity and moral virtues; and**
  - (vi) reviewing existing laws or formulating new laws with a view to providing protection to women in**



occupations with health hazards.

### **6.3 Education and Training**

- (a) The ultimate objective of this sector is to ensure that opportunities for education and training for all citizens, male as well as female, are guaranteed so that they may develop their individual potentials to the optimum and that they may be able to play a more meaningful role as productive and upright citizens.
- (b) The development of women's potentials must be given specific attention, since the present education system had evolved primarily on considerations and premises that place emphasis on men's needs and capabilities. The national system of education and training should integrate the concept of gender equality, whilst fostering appropriate attitudes and perspectives for respecting and recognizing the rights and capabilities of women as equal status with that of men.
- (c) Sexism and stereotyping of women's roles in text books, reference resources and any other forms of teaching and learning materials must be eliminated. Women have proven their capabilities in various fields of endeavour. This fact should be reflected in examples of contribution and development to society.
- (d) Further, there is a need to identify obstacles which still limit the full participation of women in basic education, vocational education, higher education, and in professional and specialized fields.

Likewise, the illiterate group and those lacking in knowledge and skills should not be neglected because a large proportion of them comprise women.

(e) Actions that could be taken to enhance the status of women in education and training shall include the following:

1. Improving and enhancing the quality of educational programmes at all levels.

A comprehensive review should be undertaken with a view to making adjustments, wherever necessary, to the curriculum, methods of teaching, provisions of facilities and the intake of students in order to:

- (i) eliminate references and illustrations in texts which are negative to the image of women;
- (ii) facilitate the participation of women in areas that are of interest to them;
- (iii) convince women that they should take up training opportunities that would enable them to go into science and modern technology;
- (iv) include family life education in all education and training programmes intended for both men and women;
- (v) review the admission policy and implementational functions of institutions to ensure that discriminatory practices towards women are not perpetuated;

- (iv) expand the vocational training opportunities for women and recognise the special skills of women in training and work; and
  - (vii) stress the importance of instituting a system of adult education and providing opportunities for lifelong education to enable women to continue developing their knowledge and skills.
2. Involving the participation of non-governmental agencies in developing educational opportunities.

Private educational institutions should be monitored to ensure that they do not perpetuate discriminatory practices or project a negative image of women. The National Women's Policy should cover all sectors and agencies, governmental as well as non-governmental.

#### **6.4. Legislation**

- (a) Every citizen has the right of protection under the law of the country. With the acceptance of the principle of equality of status of men and women, it becomes necessary to strengthen the laws to ensure that the rights of women with regard to ownership of property, citizenship, employment opportunities, and guardianship are safeguarded.
- (b) Protective legislation is necessary for women in employment, for women to fulfill their maternal and motherhood functions and obligations, for women who are

divorced or separated from their husbands and for their rights under religion.

- (c) The ignorance of women with regard to their legal rights shall be remedied, especially for those women with minimum education and do not have access to legal counsel.
- (d) Actions that could be taken to enhance the status of women under the law shall include the following:-
  - (i) to review and update existing laws to make them more effective;
  - (ii) to involve the participation of women in drafting and implementing of legislation;
  - (iii) to set up a system of bureau for complaints and counselling that are easily accessible to women;
  - (iv) to disseminate information on the rights of individuals under the law;
  - (v) to formulate protective legislation relating to domestic violence, unjust dismissal and exploitation at place of work, and for victims of rape and sexual abuse; and
  - (vi) to formulate family laws which are impartial and just, to protect the rights to solve family disputes fairly and with humanitarian considerations.

## **6.5. Employment**

- (a) The economic sector has expanded rapidly since independence. However, the benefits of economic development generally have not been fully enjoyed by the majority of women.

The participation of women in employment needs to be improved; the effects of development shall enhance the quality of life of women, particularly those in unskilled labour, in agricultural and farm work, and those employed in the manufacturing sector.

- (b) Even though the participation of women in the labour force has increased, a large proportion of the female labour force is concentrated in the low-income groups and in unskilled or semi-skilled work. Work as housewives does not have economic value, and a large majority of women toil as unpaid labour.
- (c) Many women workers do not enjoy the protective benefits of trade unions or workers' associations; in fact, many of them are not knowledgeable about workers' rights. This leads to their being exposed to exploitation by unscrupulous employers, being paid low wages incommensurate with the tasks given, having to shoulder the multiple burden of full-time employment, domestic chores, and care of the family, and not being able to enjoy the benefits and facilities of the workplace. In certain instances, women have been known to suffer harassment and sexual abuse from the management and employers.
- (d) Actions that could be taken to improve the status of women in employment shall include the following:

- (i) improving the participation of women in employment generally, and enhancing their status and well-being socially, economically and politically;
- (ii) ensuring the equitable sharing of the benefits of economic development between men and women;
- (iii) increasing and diversifying women's employment opportunities, especially for the poor and desitute and those without conjugal means of livelihood;
- (iv) requiring employers to furnish a "job description" for all types of employment and according an appropriate and just wage, irrespective of gender differences;
- (v) ensuring the provision of protective laws for all types of work;
- (vi) ensuring that the principle of equal pay for equal work be implemented; and
- (vii) eliminating discriminatory practices against women employees in matters pertaining to promotions, further training opportunities, and participation in decision - making.

## **6.6 Politics**

- (a) Women have played an active role in the political development of this country. Nevertheless, their involvement in the major national political arena is still limited. Women comprise 50% of the nation's population, and their contributions to the activities of politi-

cal parties are tremendous. They also play an important role in garnering prospective voters, yet their representation in parliament is small. Thus far, women have proved to be very effective party workers but their political strength as politicians remains untested.

- (b) The process of political progress requires the maximum participation of men and women. The factors that hinder women's participation and full realization in the political arena are very much related to socio-cultural conditions which tend to discourage women from taking an active role in public affairs, their lack of education and awareness, add their ignorance with regards to their political rights.

In addition to this , many women are so heavily burdened by work and family commitments that they are unable to devote sufficient time for a full involvement in political activities.

- (c) Actions that could be taken to improve the quality of women's involvement in politics include the following:
  - (i) the government shall initiate legislation and enforcement to ensure that women are fully involved in the political life of the nation. It shall take steps to increase the recruitment, the nomination and the appointment of women to decision and policy -making bodies at the national, state and local levels until a just representation is achieved; and
  - (ii) the government shall also support the emergence of more women representatives in policy-making and at the executive levels in Parlia-

ment, state legislative assemblies local governments and other related agencies.

## **6.7. Media**

- (a) The mass media is a very influential force for projecting women's image to the masses. An image that is negative and that which projects women as sex symbols shall not be allowed. The active participation of women in media industry is still very limited, and it is therefore difficult for them to influence the ethics of the industry or to counteract the profit motives of those who are in control of the media. Further, women's views and perspectives do not get adequate airing and exposure.
- (b) It is important that women play a more dynamic role in the development and dissemination of quality programmes whether this be for entertainment, information, education, political, commercial or international purposes.
- (c) Actions that could be taken to improve the status of Women and Media include the following:
  - (i) upgrading and facilitating the involvement of women in all aspects of media expansion. This shall encompass such aspects as policy formulation, the planning of programmes and services and the management and implementation of development projects;
  - (ii) gender analysis of all programmes to ascertain the effectiveness of women's involvement as producers and planners, the usage of media in women's advancement, and the receiver impact of media as a whole;



- (iii) eradicating all negative views and impact of media programming, advertisements, publications and portrayal on women; and
- (iv) using the influence of media positively to inculcate appropriate attitudes and values towards women and their contributions.

## **6.8. Religion**

- (a) Religion is an influential force to foster and strengthen national unity in the development process. Spiritual and divine values are shared by many religions namely, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism. It is therefore important that these positive universal values be emphasized, instead of harping on the differences between and the uniqueness of individual religions or to denigrate other people's beliefs in the preference of one's own. As philosophy and guide, religion and religious practices shall uphold the principles of equality, peace, justice, tolerance and the harmonious well-being of all citizens.
- (b) Actions to be taken to enhance the role of religion in the advancement progress of women shall include:
  - (i) soliciting the views of women when formulating "fatwa" or injunction that concern women and women's issues;
  - (ii) encouraging the active participation of women in all religious-based activities;
  - (iii) facilitating discussions between various religious groups as a measure to secure better understanding and mutual trust;

- (iv) making religion the basis for the modernization of multiethnic communities; and
- (v) creating a healthy partnership between men and women based on religious values.

## **6.9. Culture**

- (a) The national culture represents the joint efforts and contributions of both men and women. Folk arts, sports, customs and traditional practices represent the people's special contribution to national development. Therefore, the national cultural policy shall accord due attention and consideration to the development of women's participation and contributions.
- (b) Actions to be taken for the enhancement of women's active participation in the cultural life of the nation shall include:
  - (i) recognizing the role of women in the world of arts and sports and developing their special skills and talents;
  - (ii) encouraging and reinforcing the participation of women in all activities to promote the culture and arts of the nation;
  - (iii) eliminating all forms of discrimination which are gender based in the fields of arts, sports and cultural development;
  - (iv) strengthening the representation of women in the Advisory Council on National Culture; and
  - (v) ceasing the practice of tokenism where women's participation and representation are concerned.

## **SURVEY OF WOMEN MANAGERS IN EDUCATION IN SARAWAK**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this research is to study the challenges women managers in education face in combining their traditional and professional roles.

This questionnaire is intended to elicit your opinions and perceptions of the various duties you perform in your professional and personal capacity. It is constructed with the aim of enabling you to give your reactions and personal opinion on your role, responsibility and ability as an educational manager. It also provides you with the opportunity to suggest measures to help prepare women for managerial roles in education and to improve the performance of those already in managerial posts.

For this study to achieve its objectives, your honest and frank response is important. All responses will be treated as confidential. Your response will be analysed together with responses from other women managers who are participating in this study. You will not be identified in the written report.

For this study, the term 'Women Managers in Education' covers those women holding promotional posts in Secondary Schools, Teachers' Training Colleges and in the State Education Department. It therefore includes all the women who are Sector Head and their Deputies, Principals of Teachers' Training Colleges, Secondary Schools and Senior Assistants and all Heads of Department.

**Siti Katizah Razali,  
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University of Bristol,  
22 Berkeley Square,  
Bristol BS8 1JA,  
England**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**SURVEY OF WOMEN MANAGERS IN EDUCATION  
IN SARAWAK**

**Please answer all questions. Many of them require you to tick in the boxes provided. For the remainder, instructions are given with the question and space provided for your answer. If the space provided is insufficient, please use the back of the page.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR CO-OPERATION**

1. Are you in : ☐ College ☐ School ☐ Office ?

2. Age:

30 & under	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	over 50

3. Marital status : ☐ Married ☐ Single ☐ Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Religion :

Islam	
Christian	
Buddhism	
Other	

5. If married, husband's occupation is:

in education sector	
in other government department	
self-employed	
business	
Other (please state) .....	

6. Do you have any children?
☐ Yes
☐ No

➡ If yes, how many children do you have in :

	number of children
pre-school	
school	
college and university	
other (please state) .....	

7. Do you have any dependants (other than your children) living with you?

	Yes	No
parents		
grandparents		
brothers		
sisters		
others (please specify) ..... .....		

8. Who does **most** of the following activities in your household?  
 Please put a tick ( ✓ ) in the relevant column.

	self	husband	both yourself and husband	Other (please specify)	not relevant
cooking meals					
washing/ironing					
cleaning					
marketing					
looking after the children					
sending the children to school					
managing household budget					
taking the children to the dentist					
taking a sick child to the clinic					
attending to matters concerning the children's schooling					
attending to parents					
attending to in-laws					
attending to relatives					

9. Please tick the relevant box or column.

If you are employed in **School**, please complete these:

a. Location	urban	
	rural	
b. Grade	A	
	B	
c. Sessions	Single	
	Double	
d. Type	mixed	
	single-sex girls	
	single-sex boys	
e. Day/Boarding	Day	
	Boarding	
f. Number of students	less than 400	
	401 - 800	
	801 - 1200	
	more than 1201	
g. Number of teachers	less than 50	
	51-100	
	101 or more	

10. Your present position in your school/ college/ unit/ section:

Head ☐

Assistant / Deputy (e.g. PK1, PK(HEM), PP) ☐

Other (e.g. Guru Kanan matapelajaran, Ketua Jabatan) ☐

(please state) \_\_\_\_\_

➡ Length of time in present post : ☐ years

11. Management related in-service courses which you have attended in the last five years : (Please put *nil* if none)

<u>Name of course(s)</u>	<u>Year</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

subject related in-service courses which you have attended in the last five years : (please put *nil* if none)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



12. Work experience

12 (a) Date of joining service: \_\_\_\_\_

12 (b) Positions held prior to this:

<u>Position(s)</u>	<u>Number of Years</u>
Teacher	_____
Head of Department	_____
Lecturer	_____
School Inspector	_____
Senior Assistant	_____
Principal	_____
Other : (please state)	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

13. Look at the following list of typical administrative duties. How confident do you feel about them?

Item	I feel good at	I do not feel good at	Not relevant
planning the time-table			
managing curriculum implementation			
managing the staff			
managing relief or cover for absent staff			
supervision of new teachers or students			
managing boys' welfare and discipline			
managing girls' welfare and discipline			
managing school-based staff development			
organising careers' guidance for pupils			
managing examination administration			
making arrangements for school visits			
managing hospitality for visitors			
organising special events			
managing pupils' personal problems			
managing school finance			
managing resources/equipment			
managing home and school links			
managing meetings			
managing the implementation of extra-curricular activities			
managing the library			
conducting assembly			
managing building maintenance			
managing construction works			
Other duties (please state). .....			

14. If you are **given promotion away from your present station**, would you accept it?

- ☐ I will take up the offer irrespective of the place
- ☐ I will give it a try
- ☐ I will have to consider it very carefully
- ☐ I will definitely reject it

# Please give your **reason(s)** for your answer .

15. Do you feel that as a **woman** you have been **discriminated** against in terms of promotion?

Yes ☐ No ☐

# Please give your **reason(s)** for your answer .

16. Do you feel that as a **single/married** (please cross out one) woman you are discriminated against in terms of promotion?

Yes ☐ No ☐

➡ If **yes**, how does your marital status affect your opportunities for promotion?

17. If you have **ever accepted promotion**, please complete this section.

What were the reasons you **accepted** the promotion(s) offered? The following are all possible reasons, but their relative importance may be influenced by the situation in which you work. Please indicate how important each has been for you.

	Not important	Fairly important	Important	Very important	Not relevant
I was very confident I could do a good job					
I had enough experience to take on the job					
I liked the professional challenges offered					
It meant increased income					
My superior encouraged me to take it up					
My colleagues encouraged me to go for it					
My parents encouraged me to take it up					
My husband was supportive of the idea					
I had the support of my children					
I had somebody to manage the housework					
I have somebody to look after my children					
I liked seeing my friends who were in those positions					
I liked the post ( <i>jawatan</i> )					
I liked the place ( <i>tempat</i> ) to which I was sent					
Other (please specify) ..... .....					

➤ **Is there anything else you would like to say as to why you accepted the promotion?**

18. If you have ever **refused promotion** complete this section.  
 How many times have you rejected promotion? \_\_\_\_\_ **times.**  
 What were the reasons you **did not accept** the promotion(s) offered?  
 The following are all possible reasons, but their relative importance may be influenced by the situation in which you work. Please indicate how important each has been for you.

	Not important	Fairly important	Important	Very important	Not relevant
I did not feel confident enough to take up the job					
I felt I was not experienced enough in management.					
I felt I was too young to take the responsibility					
I had greater satisfaction from classroom teaching					
I did not like administrative responsibility					
I had very young children then					
My husband did not encourage me					
My children were not in favour of the idea					
I would not be able to cope with the roles at home and at work					
Other expenses would outweigh the increase in salary ( <i>Kenaikan gaji tidak setimpal dengan perbelanjaan lain</i> )					
My superior did not give me any encouragement					
The posting was not suitable for me.					
I knew it would be a lonely existence if I took it up					
Other (please state). ..... .....					

☞ **Is there anything else you would like to say as to why you did not accept promotion?**

19. When did you begin thinking of promotion in the service?

(Please tick (✓) one.

- ☐ before I started teaching
- ☐ when first joining the service
- ☐ after 3 years teaching
- ☐ after more than 5 years teaching
- ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

20. Who or what motivated you to accept promotion? Please tick (✓) as many that apply to you.

- ☐ Principal/ Deputy in the school
- ☐ my husband
- ☐ my parents
- ☐ my children
- ☐ seeing others on the job
- ☐ a belief in my own ability
- ☐ additional income
- ☐ other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

21. Did you experience any **conflicts** between the demands of home and work?

(a) *Initially*

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Very few
- ☐ None

(b) *After some time on the job*

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Some
- ☐ Very few
- ☐ None

➤ If you experience conflicts, what are they ?

# What could be done to reduce this conflict by:

➤ members of your family ?

➤ the organisation of the school?

➤ Yourself?

22. As a professional, generally, how much of your time in a week do you devote to the following? (exclude the hours you sleep?)

	less than 10 %	11-20%	21-30%	more than 30 %
your work professionally ?				
your family and home life ?				
other interests and responsibility?				

23. Do you think you have used the time you have devoted to the following effectively?

	on the whole, no	on the whole, yes
your work professionally		
your family and home life		
other interests and responsibilities		

24. Here are ten suggestions that are considered useful to successfully integrate work and personal life. Please choose the **three (3)** that you think *might be the most useful/applicable* to you.

- A. ☐ A life skills or personal development course
- B. ☐ Time management training
- C. ☐ Flexible working hours
- D. ☐ Parental leave for either mother or father when a child is sick
- E. ☐ Assertiveness training
- F. ☐ Career counselling
- G. ☐ Improved child care arrangements, e.g. workplace nurseries
- H. ☐ Rotational duties in the school so that no one feels indispensable
- I. ☐ A clear specification of your school job and duties
- J. ☐ Responsibility leave for care of relatives
- K. ☐ Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

25 Please rank the three above in order of importance.

- ☐ first
- ☐ second
- ☐ third



26. Here are some reasons women Educational Managers give which enable them to **do well** in their job. Please indicate how important, in your opinion, each is for you. If it is **not applicable** to you, please put a **dash ( - )** across it.

	Of no importance	of some importance	of great importance	of very great importance
status that comes with the job				
high expectation of the job				
support of parents				
support of husband				
support of children				
support of superior				
presence of a role model				
a lot of relevant experience				
management training				
critical event that changed perception				
growing sense of own competence (bertambah kecekapan din)				
collegial networking (hubungan dan bantuan rakan-rakan)				
a good qualification				
good communication skills				
ability to delegate work				
collective decision making				
good working climate (iklim tempat kerja yang baik)				
Other (please specify)				
.....				
.....				

27 Please indicate how satisfactory the following **support and provision** have been for you. If it is **not applicable** to you, please put a **dash ( - )** across it.

	not satisfactory	quite satisfactory	satisfactory	very satisfactory
status that comes with the job				
high expectation of the job				
support of parents				
support of husband				
support of children				
support of superior				
presence of a role model				
a lot of experience				
management training				
critical event that changed perception				
growing sense of own competence				
collegial networking				
a good qualification				
good communication skills				
ability to delegate work				
collective decision making				
good working climate				
Other (please specify) ..... .....				

28. What changes, improvements or directions would you like to see in your social or family home life in the next five years?

➡ What would prevent you from achieving these changes or directions?

I would be most interested to know about any other views you may have concerning women in educational management in education in Sarawak; particularly with reference to your experience of any conflicts between traditional and professional challenges. Please add below any other comments that you feel are important.

***Please return all completed questionnaires, using the self-addressed and stamped envelope enclosed, to the following address:-***

**Siti Katizah Razali,  
Jabatan Pendidikan Negeri,  
Tingkat 11,  
Bgn. Tun Datuk Tuanku Hj. Bujang,  
93604 Kuching**

**on or before 17 March 1997**

**SEIKLAS PENGHARGAAN DAN SETULUS TERIMA KASIH KERANA  
SUMBANGAN MASA DAN FIKIRAN ANDA YANG AMAT BERNILAI.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR VALUABLE TIME AND THOUGHTS.**

<p><b>INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR WOMEN MANAGERS</b></p>
-----------------------------------------------------

1. Can you describe what it is like to work in this school/office? What time do you normally go home from work?
2. How do you divide your time between your work as a Head and as a wife and mother?
3. What was your expectation of your professional responsibilities when you took on this job? Do you feel you were adequately prepared for these responsibilities?
4. Is this the first time the school has a woman head? What was the reaction of the staff in your school to your appointment to this post?
5. What was the reaction of the community to your appointment to Head this school? Had it been in another locality, would it have been different?
6. How did your spouse, children, parents react to your promotion?
7. What kind of support do you get from
  - (a) your superior?
  - (b) your parents?
  - (c) your husband?
  - (d) other family members?
  - (e) colleagues?
  - (f) staff members?

How do you describe a supportive husband?

8. Describe to me what kind of support you expect from
  - (a) the SED?
  - (b) the DEO?
  - (c) fellow Heads?
9. What is your perception of the traditional roles of women? Where do these perceptions come from?
10. Do you find any conflict in your role as a mother and as a professional woman?
11. Would you like to have some form of networking with other lady educational managers?

12. How would you visualize an effective *educational manager*? How far do you fit your own image of an effective educational manager? What managerial skills and leadership qualities would you consider important for them to possess? How do you suggest this can be achieved? What kind of training would you consider relevant for improving educational management in Sarawak? What actions do you think the Department should take to improve educational management in Sarawak?
13. What support services do you consider crucial? Do you consider the 42 days maternity leave sufficient? What about childcare provision? What else can be done to encourage more women to be educational managers?
14. Would you be prepared to serve in a bigger school/ head a section?

<b>INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HUSBANDS OF WOMEN MANAGERS</b>
----------------------------------------------------------

1. Can you describe what your wife's working day is like? What time does your wife come back from work? Does she bring work home?
2. Do you like her taking up this job? Did you encourage her to take up this job?
3. When she took up this job, did it in any way change your family lifestyle?
4. How do your children feel about their mother now having to spend more time at work?
5. Is your wife away very often? When she is away on official duty, do you have any help to look after the children? How do your parents view her frequent absence from home?
6. Do you help her in the housework? Do the children help out?
7. What is your perception of a woman's traditional role as opposed to a professional role? Do you think there is still this conflict between the traditional roles and the professional roles? Do you see the upcoming of more women into professional roles?
8. What is your view of the 42 days maternity leave? What is your view of the childcare provision in the country?
9. How do you rate your wife's performance as an educational manager? On what basis are you saying this? Do you have any opportunity to interact with your wife's colleagues?
10. If both you and your wife are offered job promotion at nearly the same time, but the posts are at different stations, how would you make the choice as to who should take up the promotion offer? What are the factors that you would consider? What are the factors that both of you would consider?
11. What else would you have liked to do to assist her further so that she can improve on her performance as a mother and a Head?

A SAMPLE OF A ONE-DAY TIME-LOG DIARY (Sample 1)



DATE: 13.5.97



DAY: Tuesday

TIME	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS, if any
5.00-6.15 am	Knocked on the children's door, checked note on dressing table mirror on reminders written day before. 1 glass of milk while hubby had his breakfast. Left for school.	Weather ok, drive to school interesting: At least 2 cars (staff's) overtook me - they looked so pleased!
6.50	One lady teacher came knocking re change of mind about transfer.	What a relief! We'd have found it difficult to get another one as dedicated.
0715	To staff room: Only one teacher away - attending SWA/AYA briefing.	PK1 has got the mt-in list ready.
0740	Popped into 3C -> quite dark: they lost the starter again	To mention this to Dennis when he comes in.
0810-0820	- Dr. Zui ramp: Benkel Soulen Amasama	
	- Pi. Fritz ramp: Shrimp of room during the coming conference	
0830	- PK1 came in: On her way to HQ	
0910	- PK HGM: Warden's report	Decision: To call his parents.



# A SAMPLE OF A ONE-DAY TIME-LOG DIARY (contd.)




DATE: 13.5.97




DAY: Tuesday

TIME	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS, if any
0920	Siti came: Interview	
↓	Quite a lot of interruptions:	
1050	- Grendin called re Ken Wajadisi	- That's the second time today.
	- Dennis re post: poem of Majlis Y. Sarawati (fiction)	
1310	- lunch with	
↓	Annie at 10th.	
1400	Write Cafe	
1430	Attended to correspondence:	
↓	New graduate teacher reported for duty.	- Not bad - speaks English well & ex-student of the school.
1520		
1530	Matron came re list of kitchen utensils for the Ramadan trip.	Okayed the menu for teachers' Day celebration.
1700	- Reached home.	
↓	Joined the 2 little ones in video game.	
1830		
2000	- Tucked both into beds.	
	- Read day's paper	Wrote reminder for Wednesday.

A SAMPLE OF A ONE-DAY TIME-LOG DIARY

DATE: Sunday



DAY: 15/6/97

TIME	ACTIVITIES	COMMENTS, if any
7.20 a.m.	Attend church service which lasts for 1½ hrs. Have a wonderful fellowship after the service, catching up with the latest news	<del>It's</del> so important that I keep up with this weekly spiritual renewal - to set my priority in lives right.
9.30 a.m.	Go marketrip with my husband. We only do it once a week.	Think of it, we subsist on packed lunch every afternoon. I only prepare dinner. Sometimes I just skip lunch!
10.00 a.m.	Go to town to have our breakfast.	I really treis rare moment when we can really be together & relax.
12.00 pm	Dig out all the magazines & newspaper to read.	
12.30 pm	Have a good afternoon nap.	We seldom have nap on week days' afternoon.
3.00 pm	Continue with my reading.	I only have time to read on weekends. No wonder it informed that average m'sian only read a page a year. I am probably one of them!
4.30 pm	Wash my car, while my husband wash his.	My colleague used to commiserate that one reason why students don't scratch my car is because it is too dirty. They might dirty their hands while doing it. Not too bad a way to prevent Vandalism eh?
5.30-6.30	Walking in the park & exchanging views with my walking partners.	

## A SAMPLE OF AN ANALYSED SEVEN-DAYS' TIME-LOG DIARY

Notes: Appendix 5c shows how the one-week time-log diary is analysed

1. The time spent on various activities are divided into 5 categories as shown in the columns.
2. The total time spent on the various activities are then quantified for a day and then for a week. In this example, for the week in question, she spent approximately 43 hours on school premise, of which 42 hours are spent on actual and related school work; 7 hours on school work off school premise; 35 hours on family; and 14 hours on personal interests.

	Total time spent on school premises.	Time spent on actual school work and school related work on school premises	Time spent on school-related work off school premises	Time spent on family.	Time spent on personal interests.
<b>Day 1 Tue</b>	0650-1700	0715 to staffroom 0730 to 3C class 0810 2 colleagues rang 0830-0920 met PK1 & warden 0920-1050 Siti came for interview (few interruptions) 1430 do correspondences 1520 new graduate teacher came in 1530 matron came	2015 wrote reminder for Wed	1700-1815 wake up children, b/f 1310-1400 lunch with one of my staff 1700-1830 joined 2 little ones in video games 2000 tucked both into bed	2030 read newspaper
<b>Day 2 Wed</b>	0650-1530	0700-0750 assembly 0810 signed teachers' transfer forms 0830-0850 3 colleagues rang 0900-0940- met all SAs/HODs 0940-1030 ADEO came - furniture for new building(coffee break) 1030-1115 to Block 3,4,5-Lab Attendant reminded me of old tree near lab.	2015 did some school work	1700-1815 wake up children, b/f 1530 reached home & helped son with coming test preparation 1730 went for drive with the 2 boys 2000 tucked both into bed	2030 read newspaper
<b>Day 3 Thurs</b>	0645-1630	0645-0810 minutes and correspondence 0810-0900 prepared text for Teachers' Day speech 0900-0930 staffroom 0930 Has final discussion for next day 1040 To Dining Hall and Kitchen 1130-1300 correspondence 1300 talked to PK(HEM) re:discipline returns 1500 checked with clerk re: projection of repairs		1700-1815 wake up children, b/f 1730 picked cake for son's class 2015 tucked both into bed	1730 hairwash at saloon 2030 bed
<b>Day 4 Fri</b>	0700-1400	went straight to dinning hall- 0720 Teachers' Day celebration starts-speeches, cakes, flowers & photo-taking, telematches 1300 sit down lunch NB. Comments 1. Everyone dressed in their best-they really looked great 2. The students' speeches and gestures, somehow they make you forget how they are the rest of the year.		1700-wake up children, b/f - son insisted that she sent him to school-talked all the way 2000 tucked both into bed	1430-1700 caught up with novel & slept 1930 called up friends 2130-wrote birthday cards & opened presents

<b>Day 5 Sat</b>			0730 called school office - will be attending function elsewhere 0830-1300 Official function at Dewan Suarah (met friends from HQ) 1430 called Chief warden	1700-1815 wake up children 0630 got the 2 boys to give sister birthday presents 1350 reached home - everyone's seated ready for lunch (one of 2 days in the week we can have lunch together) 1930 dinner out celebrating daughter's birthday -family TV	0700 called up teacher who's also celebrating birthday 2030 read newspaper -slept late -watched TV
<b>Day 6 Sun</b>			1930 - write reminders for the next day	0700 everyone's ready to go to Sunday Market to get flowers - on to cemetery. - back at Market for breakfast and marketing 1200 cooked Sunday lunch (the only time allowed to do it by helper) 1330 - lunch; elder brother & wife came too (brother knew that she always cooked some of their 'typical' local dishes) 1500 - brother left & everyone settled themselves comfortably in front of TV 1700 - a bit of pottering around, gardening and watching children wash the cars -late tea: an extended affair; no one bothers about dinner 1930 prepare son's school bag 2000 tucked both into bed (rest of day spent with family)	2100 - turned in early
<b>Day 7 Mon</b>	0640-1500	0640 reached school & read today's papers 0700 to staff room - checked Teachers' Record books 0915 - checked with PK (HEM) on farewell tea for teacher on transfer 0930-1000 - discussed with PK1 on list for exam supervisors 1100 - correspondence -PE HoD discussed request for new equipment - official came to discuss taking part in dance festival - signed Bill Register, Service Order, and GSA minutes 1330 - to staff room	1630 - signed Vote Book (worked in own room, oblivious to all knockings on door!)	1700-1815 wake up children, b/f 1030 adjourned to canteen for coffee break 2000 tucked both into bed	2030 read newspaper

NB. 1. School Teachers' Day (celebrated at same time as National level Teachers' Day) on 16 May.

## AN EXAMPLE OF HOW OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS WERE ANALYSED

**Question 14. If you are given promotion away from your present station, would you accept it?**

No = number responding in this way

ID = Identifying numbers

ANS = Respondent's choice

A = I will take up the offer irrespective of the place

B = I will give it a try

C = I will have to consider it very carefully

D = I will definitely reject it

## A = DEFINITELY YES

No	ID	ANS	REASONS
1.	2	A	It is sometimes better to be in outstation because when you're on leave you're really away from it all
2.	10	A	1. I am willing to accept new challenges and experience. 2. I am a good manager.
3.	18	A	As a civil servant, I do not have much choice . It is my duty to serve anywhere I am posted
4.	74	A	I always enjoy the challenge
5.	76	A	I am willing to serve anywhere

## B = GIVE IT A TRY

1.	3	B	to explore new areas, to asses self capabilities in certain aspects, to experience a higher level of work experience, to upgrade oneself/ to be more professional
2.	16	B	for my future & satisfaction
3.	23	B	It's good to have a chance & take up new challenges
4.	24	B	Now that my 2 children have gone overseas, I am more mobile
5.	27	B	It is always good to learn new things all the time and face new challenges in life
6.	34	B	you will never know what you are capable of unless you try
7.	99	B	Being given a promotion could indicate that my superiors believe that I am capable of handling matters/situations pertaining to education. I feel that this belief/trust in my worthiness would encourage me to take on /create new challenges.
8.	89	B	As long as it does not disrupt our family togetherness
9.	53	B	self development. In order to see the scope of my ability/capability.
10.	55	B	If a person doesn't try, he/she will never know her own potential
11.	59	B	Because who knows, I can be a good manager so I need to give it a try
12.	78	B	I want to know more about management. I want to know my ability in management

### C-CONSIDER IT CAREFULLY ( FAMILY REASONS)

1.	1	C	I have to consider my mother's well being
2.	4	C	I have been posted away from my home for 8 years. I prefer to be nearer home.
3.	7	C	I'll have to consider whether the promotion might separate me from my family or not
4.	8	C	My husband is employed by another Government Agency. That will mean he will only serve in Kuching unless he is attached to some other government departments that have set up office outside of Kuching city
5.	9	C	Have to consider about family, self happiness because money is not everything that we care about
6.	12	C	If the new station is near I will give it a try. If it is too far away from my home, most probably I'll reject it because I still have 2 school-going children
7.	21	C	family and children
8.	14	C	It has to suit my family requirements and my obligations to my family as a mother
9.	15	C	Whatever it is, as a mother to 3 children and wife, I feel family should come first
10.	20	C	family to be considered
11.	25	C	a. I have to take into consideration my family especially my children's education. b. The location of the new station c. The condition of the new school
12.	28	C	It depends on the location of the new station. If it is too far away, then I would have trouble managing my household duties and my job
13.	30	C	I will need to consider several factors: my children; family/home life; old parents & mother-in-law; my own suitability for the new post and station
14.	32	C	family welfare first and foremost and the success of my 4 children must override mine. I don't want to be the only successful one in the family, I want all members to achieve success
15.	35	C	family commitment
16.	37	C	I have to consider my family ties
17.	38	C	Because I'll have to make sure that my family can be with me since my husband cannot ask for transfer to anywhere
18.	40	C	I have to put up first priority for my family
19.	43	C	commitment to family
20.	45	C	I love Kuching and I feel comfortable and happy here. If my children are all grown up, I don't mind being posted elsewhere
21.	46	C	Being a wife and mother, I have to consider all factors which might affect my family's welfare due to the move. Once a decision is made, it is difficult to retract
22.	47	C	family obligation
23.	48	C	I have to think of my family first
24.	51	C	I will not accept a promotion if it means I will be posted somewhere far from home or if it entails long working hours, as my children are still young and they need a lot of supervision
25.	52	C	the type of school; family
26.	84	C	I must put my family first in the sense that I do not wish to be separated from my children, who need guidance
27.	87	C	Considering family needs and career are both equally important, intelligent decision must be made. In order not to have any problem in the future both parties should receive "win-win situation"
28.	97	C	I have commitment to my present school and church. If the promotion takes me away from my commitment, I would have to reject it.
29.	88	C	If the position is suitable, Then I'll accept it.
30.	96	C	Family obligations and the fact that I've served outstations for quite a long time so most likely prefer to work 'in-station'
31.	91	C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nature of the job</li> <li>• Implication towards the family structure</li> </ul>

32.	92	C	My children's welfare and upbringing comes first
33.	95	C	family
34.	77	C	already away from home
35.	82	C	family consideration
36.	83	C	To ensure that the new posting would not entail separation from my family and thereby jeopardizing my son's education
37.	60	C	a. I've bought a house here in Kuching b. Family commitment (nearer to them if I am still at present station) c. Accessibility - to so many departments, sections (and be served first)
38.	61	C	family problems
39.	62	C	I've to see the situations and circumstances
40.	63	C	I have to take into account my family's welfare
41.	65	C	I have to consider my family's well-being
42.	66	C	Given the choice, I'll consider accepting. I'll have to consider the job (whether I can do the job successfully/consider the place). Being able to do a job well and be happy in the job (whatever it is) is what matters most.
43.	68	C	I have to check my priority - between family and career demands
44.	70	C	I will take the offer only if I don't have to move away from the house
45.	72	C	have to consider family, convenience, loneliness if in the interior
46.	73	C	In cases which may involve separation from the family
47.	75	C	Due to family commitment and health problem of children

#### **C = CONSIDER CAREFULLY (REASONS OTHER THAN FAMILY)**

1.	36	C	I have to consider: a. where the new station is; b. what the working condition is like; c. because I enjoy working in the present station
2.	56	C	1. I am not very ambitious 2. I've some inferiority complex 3. I don't like pulling up roots from one place & resettle in another
3.	100	C	I have to consider whether I can work effectively in the new post and hence bring a lot of job satisfaction
4.	94	C	I realize that by taking up such an offer, I need to be prepared to contribute more (and hence more sacrifices)

#### **D = DEFINITELY REJECT**

1.	64	D	Material benefits/advancement such as more money and higher social status are trivial to me at this point and time as I will be retiring in 2 years time. Family togetherness and happiness are of greater importance.
2.	67	D	a. Have served in rural areas for 11 years already b. Children are big - found roots in present station
3.	71	D	I do not wish to part from my family (if it's outstation) and also I love my present station (the people and the job)
4.	86	D	health reason; family disruption
5.	79	D	Unless not too far away, able to commute from home to school daily
6.	57	D	I give priority to my family
7.	58	D	a. Get more satisfaction from teaching (direct contact with students) b. Not interested in management field

8.	17	D	a. My husband is based here. b. I am contented with my present post. c. We like living in this town
9.	13	D	For as long as my parents are still around, I would never want to be away from them
10.	19	D	because I don't want to leave my family behind
11.	22	D	I do not wish to be separated from my family
12.	29	D	At my age I don't think I can handle the stress of a change in station especially because it will mean to a coed school. 5 or 10 years ago, I might give it a try. With <3 years to go, definitely no. I'm unfortunately a perfectionist/workaholic and that is why.
13.	39	D	I am an asthmatic and need good medical treatment constantly. I have been hospitalized 3 times in the last 20 months



## Example of Interview Analysis

## APPENDIX 7:

### Theme: Sources of Perceptions of Traditional Role of Women.

#### WM 8

#### WM 5

1.	Q. Where do these perceptions of traditional role come from?  -	<p><i>- It's from the experiences that I have, observing people , observing as we grow older from the time that I was a young girl to the present moment, I've been noticing and been observing about the role of women.</i></p> <p><i>- Culture ....., ya, it does contribute... The Melanau, the women of the community are supposed to have that kind of role as was mentioned earlier and to them a woman coming out from the household and doing the things that men do are a bit out of line.</i></p>	<p><i>- From my religious and cultural upbringing, and I believe in it myself because it is what is expected, requested of you and in your religion actually.</i></p>
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#### WM 4

#### WM 7

1.	<p>Q. Where do these perceptions of traditional role come from?</p> <p>Q. Would you say that this perception that you have is different from the traditional Chinese?</p>	<p><i>- A. From my upbringing, the environment I was brought up in.</i></p>	<p><i>- For me, because of my upbringing, my mother is very liberal type. From my observation, my mother is more domineering than my father, whereas my mother-in-law is the reverse. From young, I have observed my mother, I have never perceived this traditional role. And all my sisters are all working women and they're not like that, what we call traditional women. Because my mother, she was the one who make decisions, without my mother, I don't think I will be able to go to university, even though I was on scholarship, but she was the one who make the decision because after Form 6, they wanted me to start working immediately, but my mother overruled. To me I don't have this view of women as perceived by the traditional Chinese.</i></p> <p><i>- Yes, because the way I look at my mother. If I look at my mother-in-law is different, my sisters-in-law are greatly influenced by my mother-in-law. I have 4 brothers-in-law, their wives really have to perform like the traditional Chinese women, when the husbands come back, they have to serve drinks. They have to really serve the husband, their husbands never even lift their fingers to help, for instance, in the washing, cleaning, even though they are working women too, but they are still expected to do all the household work.</i></p>
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**Notes:** Appendix 7 shows how the interviews are analysed.

1. Interviewees answers are divided into themes/issues.
2. They are then tabulated according to the themes. In this example, sources of perceptions of traditional roles of women are analysed.
3. The main points are then highlighted (shown in bold in this example).
4. Common features across the informants are then identified. For example, in this example common features are influence of culture, religion, upbringing and experience.

WM 6

WM 2

1.	<p>- Where do these perceptions of traditional role come from?</p> <p>Q. Can you say that the perception that you mentioned earlier is no longer maintained?</p> <p>Q. Do you see it as you're taking on board more, such as undertaking income earning which was not done by your mother?</p>	<p><i>- I think it's both, religion, culture and my family. Of course the immediate is family, but family has the religious element in it.</i></p> <p><i>- I think time change, the environment, the situation, because we don't have a house maid, family members can't expect me to do everything from A to Z, they want me to work because there is a need to assist the family financially. I kind of can do both with their help of course, everyone</i></p> <p><i>- No, I still ensure that .... that's why sometimes I feel guilty if I have not spent much time with the children. But deep in me I still make sure that the children will have the elements, the values whatever, that the DOS and the don'ts... I make sure that they are brought up properly.</i></p> <p><i>- I mean such things like scolding, telling them they can do this, don't do that .... most of the time is done by me. I still see that my perception of the traditional role is there, the only thing is the time spent with them, what my late mother has done is , she's a full -time housewife.</i></p> <p><i>- I think it is 50:50.</i></p>	<p><i>-More from my own culture.</i></p>
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## WM 1

## WM 3

1.	Where do these perceptions of traditional roles come from?	<p><i>It's not my perception, I see that with my other sisters-in-law, my sisters who are married and who are working. They are required, they are expected to fulfil their traditional roles, they go and do the marketing, they send their children to school, they see to the husband's needs, their children's need, the in-laws' needs, even though they are working. In fact all my sisters have had to do that. My mother expected me to perform my traditional duties, role even though I was working. She felt it was wrong of me, not to serve my husband his breakfast personally, even though we have a maid. the same also for lunch and dinner. She came to stay with, it upsets her very much that I did not do that. She felt I was not a very good wife.</i></p> <p><i>- it's more to do with culture. I would call it Chinese culture it is expected, but I was brought up that way. I was brought up to be obedient, submissive, filial daughter-in-law, wife. Actually as far as my mother was concerned I was a failure as a well brought up Chinese daughter. She even actually apologised to my husband, for me, that she's not as well heeled as my other sisters. I am more rebellious, she attributed to my education. I was interested to study, I wanted to study and my mother and my grandmother were opposed to it. It was because I had the support of my father that I could continue studying because they were all ready to marry me off the moment I finished my Form Three. Actually in my family, my family is very conventional, very traditional, all the marriages were arranged. When I was in Form 2 the matchmakers had already approached my mother and my grandmother for my hand. So I was rebellious, I objected to that. My mother actually apologised to my husband-to-be and my prospective mother-in-law, if I am not as obedient as I should be, as I ought to be, they have to train me. Her excuse was I was so busy studying</i></p>	<p><i>A. I think it's more handed down, I don't think it's culture driven. But that's one way of looking at it, now with all the development, with all the expansion in the career, with more opportunities, where we know that the women workforce is greater than men, I think we are making inroads in that sense. It's more of how society change, and women now also playing greater roles. Whereas in the past there were fewer jobs, so since traditionally the women stay at home, it's only the men who feel it. But now with so many ladies we don't need them at home and they are better educated so all that.</i></p>
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